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THE TIMES

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 12 1992

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INTERNATIONAL EDITION

45p

TODAY IN THE TIMES GLORIOUS TWELFTH



The Glorious Twelfth has been hijacked by fashionable trendies in search of goodlooking gear

Life & Times

Page 8

GLORIOUS REIGN



King Husain of Jordan celebrates 40 years on the throne to become the longest surviving leader in the Middle East

Page 8

GLORIOUS ROLE



Rosie Barnes has left the House to look after the nation's mothers and babies

Life & Times

Page 5

Bad spelling penalised

Children who fail to come up to scratch in spelling, punctuation and grammar in coursework will be penalised. The government has announced that from September these skills will come under much tougher scrutiny.

Baroness Blatch, education minister, said: "We do a disservice to the schoolchildren of this country if we allow them to think that 'sloppy' written work is acceptable." **Page 2**

Degree results

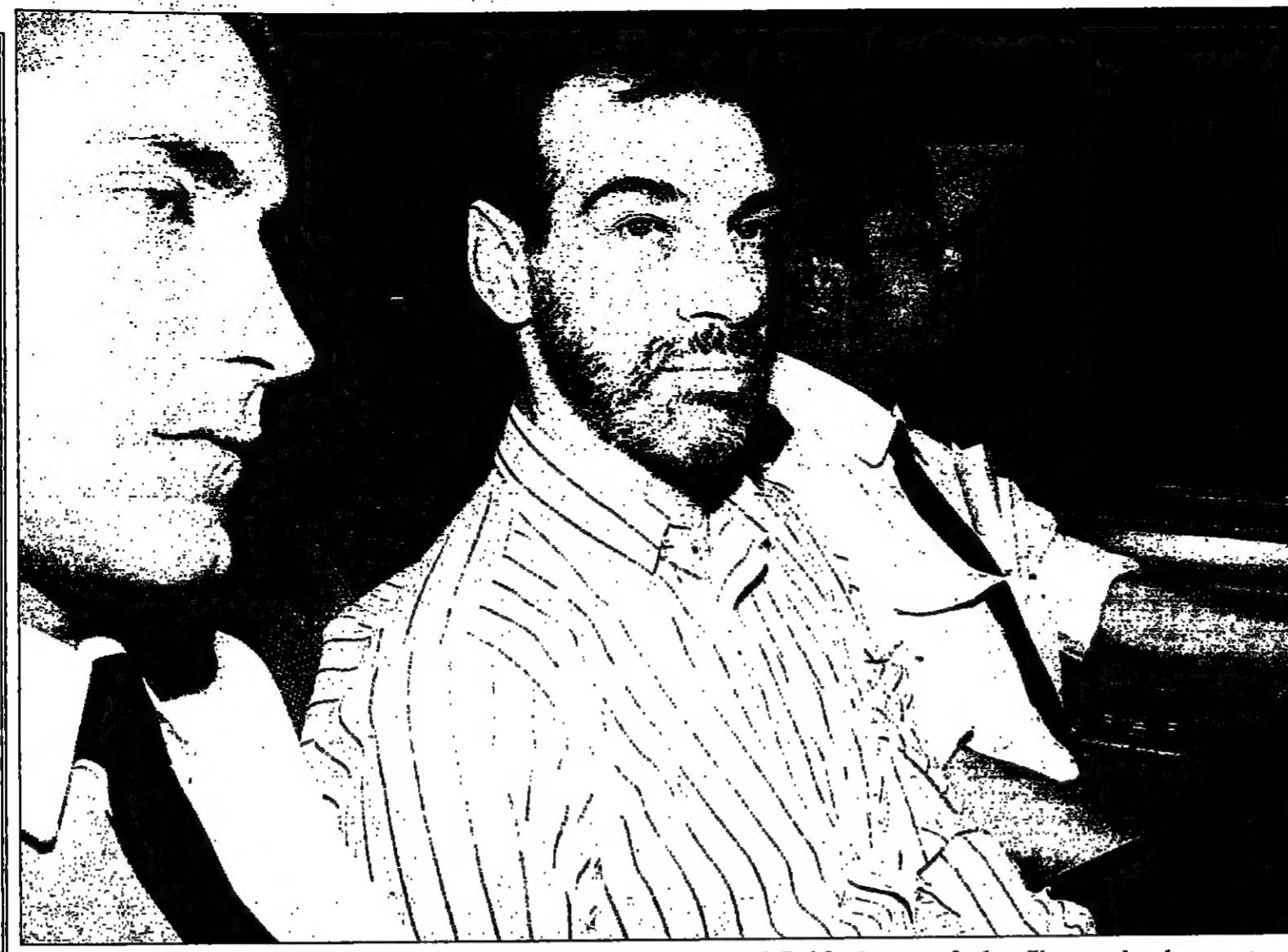
Degree results from Cambridge, London and Ulster universities appear today on page 9 of the Life & Times section. During the summer The Times will publish in full the results of all classes from all universities and former polytechnics.

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Simon Berkowitz in a prison van outside the Old Bailey, where he was jailed for 2½ years for handling a stolen document

Bush hails new era in US-Israeli relations

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND RICHARD BEESTON IN AMMAN

PRESIDENT Bush yesterday signalled a new era in US-Israeli relations at a crucial stage in the Middle East peace process by proclaiming the unfreezing of \$10 billion (£5.2 billion) in housing loan guarantees for Israel at the end of a two-day summit with Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister.

After three years of near-hostility between Mr Bush and Yitzhak Shamir, Mr Rabin's hardline predecessor, the president lavished praise on Mr Rabin for radical changes in Israeli policies. These have not only transformed prospects for advancing the Arab-Israeli peace process but also enabled Mr Bush to start courting the important Jewish-American vote before November's presidential election.

Some in the Arab world reacted angrily. Both Palestinian and Jordanian officials, whose co-operation is the key to the success of the Middle East talks resuming on August 24, accused Mr Bush of going back on his word and gave warning that Wash-



ington had lost credibility as the main co-sponsor for the talks.

Suleiman Najjar, a member of the 15-man Palestine Liberation Organisation executive committee, who has been involved in preparations with Palestinian negotiators for the Washington round,

said: "So long as the world has not heard Mr Rabin state clearly that he will stop all settlements in the occupied territories, then approving the guarantees is very bad news. This will hurt the peace

An angry President Bush denounced as "a lie" reports that he had an affair with a secretary, Jennifer Fitzgerald, in the 1980s. The *New York Post* yesterday became the first newspaper to make public rumours of an affair, focusing on an alleged "tryst" between the couple in 1984 in Geneva.

Full details, page 8

process and damage American credibility, because they are, in effect, helping to finance what they have stated themselves is the major obstacle to peace in the region."

But some Palestinians said they hoped that Mr Rabin would stop settlements and had given Mr Bush undertakings to this effect. In spite of the public Arab anger, there was no suggestion that any of the parties would withdraw from the process or boycott the resumption of talks. Privately, many Arab figures are

sympathetic to Mr Bush's electoral difficulties. For most of the Arab world, a Democratic victory by Bill Clinton and his pro-Israeli running mate, Al Gore, could have far more damaging implications for US-Arab relations than the loan guarantee reversal.

In Kennebunkport, the president announced the unfreezing of the loan guarantees that Israel needs to settle up to a million Soviet emigres over the next five years, saying that he and Mr Rabin had agreed "an approach which will assist these new Israelis without frustrating the search for peace".

Mr Rabin briefed Mr Bush on his plans for introducing Palestinian autonomy within a year. The president acknowledged that there were unspecified "differences", but said he believed that the hit-and-miss peace talks were about to enter a "new, more productive phase".

Mr Rabin "has persuaded me that Israel's new government is committed to making these talks succeed", Mr Bush said in an oblique criticism of Mr Shamir. "I call upon the Arab parties to respond in kind. The time has come to make peace, not simply to talk of it."

Mr Rabin pledged that Israel would "do its utmost" to promote the US-backed peace efforts begun in Madrid last September and to "inject new momentum into the negotiations" while not compromising Israel's security.

He urged the Arabs to "share our goodwill and openness", adding: "The chances for a better peaceful future are there. Let us all take advantage of them."

In a clear pitch to Jewish voters, Mr Bush went out of his way to emphasise the restoration of America's traditionally strong relationship with Israel.

Continued on page 14, col 8

Leading article, page 11

Mortgage fears, page 15

Skipton raises mortgage rate

BY LINDSAY COOK, MONEY EDITOR

THE Skipton Building Society is today raising its mortgage rate for its 65,000 borrowers by 0.5 per cent to 11.25 per cent. The move comes because savers have been deserting the 14th largest society and will cause concern if other medium-size follow.

The increase comes days before the temporary concession on stamp duty is withdrawn on August 19, typically adding £600 to

housebuying costs. Other societies with pressures on their margins could follow, although the largest lenders are anxious not to damage the very fragile mortgage market. The Skipton is also increasing savers' rates, from

tomorrow.

If one or two medium-size societies increase their rates and appear to be winning savers' money, the market leaders will have to follow. Societies have found it difficult

to compete with high-

paying tax-free National Savings products this year.

These have been reduced by the government twice in the past month to help societies to stop an outflow of funds. To

attract mortgage business

societies have had to offer lower rates of interest to first-time buyers and large

borrowers.

Leading article, page 11

Mortgage fears, page 15

Profit motive, page 3

Give us this day, our daily hamburger

BY ALAN HAMILTON

AS YOU wander through this cathedral, says a souvenir scroll being handed out to tourists who come to gaze on the soaring Gothic of Salisbury, may something of God's grace touch your heart, that you may go on your way with His blessing. Where He would really like you to go is half a mile down the road to McDonald's.

Chaucer's clerk had his glass of pigges bones and the devout who used to trail to Santiago de Compostela would sport a cockleshell as proof of their faith, done that. Today's pilgrims to Salisbury are to be rewarded for their devotions with a free Big Mac. There has never been such a sales gimmick since the trade in indulgences fell away.

There is, mercifully, no suggestion that communion wafer should give way to quarter-pounder, nor wine to strawberry milkshake, but Salisbury's prima-

ry burger joint has come in a small way to the aid of a cathedral that costs £3,000 a day to run. McDonald's has provided scrolls on mock-parchment paper, handed out free to cathedral visitors to prove that they have been there. The hand which keeps the scroll rolled up may then be taken to the burger bar and exchanged for a meal.

You have to pay for one meal to get one free. There is always a catch, whatever the religion. Still, Salisbury's tourist office thinks it a splendid idea. Some city councillors are less enthused, branding it a cheap stunt hardly better than having three armholes of St Giles for sale.

The local McDonald's has already supported schools and a theatre. The burgermaster of Salisbury will donate part of his proceeds to the cathedral, but it may be little more than a nibble into the £230,000 a year it costs just to maintain the fabric of the building. The scheme is separate from the spire fund patronised by the Prince of Wales.

"If we have to indulge from time to

time in a little honest commercialism, then so be it," Christopher Owen, the chapter clerk, who oversees cathedral finances, said yesterday. Sponsorship had a long history, he said, from the original builders who tapped the high,

the mighty and the poor to build the

thing, to the fireworks company which

donated its products to the closing ceremony of the spire appeal two weeks ago.

Last year the Rt Rev John Baker, Bishop of Salisbury, expressed fears

that the running of the cathedral was

being overtaken by the need for cash.

Salisbury does not charge an entrance fee, but suggests a donation of £1.50.

The bishop, who is out of the country,

has apparently raised no objection to the latest scheme. He, the dean and chapter appear to view it with the proper burger accompaniment — relish.



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20,000 flee the terrors of 'ethnic cleansing'

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR
AND JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

ABOUT 20,000 Bosnian refugees are expected to stream into Croatia in the next few days as ethnic cleansing by Serbian fighters forces the biggest exodus since the civil war began.

United Nations refugee officials in Croatia were bracing themselves for a massive operation to provide food and shelter to desperate refugees coming across the border in cars, buses and lorries to Karlovac in northwestern Croatia. The Serbian authorities handed representatives of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees a list of more than 5,000 families who had "voluntarily" expressed their desire to leave Bosnia.

"This is a standard part of ethnic cleansing," said Peter Kessler, the UNHCR spokesman. "It is basically a blackmail which they present to the UN." Croatia already has 640,000 refugees from Bosnia and has said it cannot cope with any more. The cost of feeding existing refugees is estimated to be \$2.5 million (£1.3 million) a day.

Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, said after his two-day tour of Bosnia that conditions in Serb-run camps had "clearly improved", but bureaucratic delays and transport difficulties prevented him inspecting more than two. He spent only half an hour at Manjaca camp near Banja Luka on Monday afternoon, and said afterwards that though conditions were "vile", this is not a death camp, this is not a concentration camp".

France said yesterday it was making some Awacs (early warning aircraft) available to the Western Europe Union to help naval forces deployed in the Adriatic.

A Russian fact-finding mission to the former Yugoslavia returned to Moscow yesterday, denying the existence of "concentration camps" in Bosnia, rejecting the use of force to protect aid convoys and calling for more understanding of Serbia's position. The Russian government however expressed support for the UN resolution, saying it was "consistent" with Russian policy.

Warring parties, page 7
Sir Michael Armitage, page 10

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Ministers resist calls to ban UDA on mainland

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE government is resisting demands from MPs to extend its ban on the Ulster Defence Association to mainland Britain. Although there is support for the outlawed organisation in Protestant areas of Scotland, Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, has decided that the organisation does not pose a terrorist threat on the mainland.

Mr Clarke has consulted Ian Lang, the Scottish secretary, and Sir Patrick Mayhew, Northern Ireland secretary, about outlawing the Loyalist paramilitary group on the mainland but

Defiance behind steel shutters

BY TIM JONES

ABOVE A fish shop and behind the security locks and steel shutters of their Shankill Road headquarters, the high command of the Ulster Defence Association sit coffee and put on a good show of being laid back.

These are the men whose two decades of legality have been ended by Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland secretary, who said that he was satisfied they were actively and primarily engaged in the criminal and terrorist acts.

The UDA has been linked with protection and extortion rackets since its birth in 1969. Vicious internal power plays have resulted in betrayal and death. More seriously, it has been regarded as a flag of convenience for the Ulster Freedom Fighters, an organisation which has specialised in sectarian killings, this year killing more people than the IRA.

Yesterday, in the first interview granted since being proscribed, four men who hold key positions in the inner circle of the UDA leadership delivered a grim warning to the security forces.

"You can abolish us but you cannot disband us," one said. "You can drive us underground but we will not go away. We will defend our communities against the IRA and against anyone who wants to sell us to the Irish Republic. It is the God-given right of any men to defend his country and his family if they are threatened."

Lies of silence, page 10

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Photo by Paul Lowe / NETWORK



Shadowy trade: customs officer Tony Frith yesterday with part of the world's biggest seizure of coral, worth more than £500,000 and weighing 80 tonnes, taken from Felixstowe and Tilbury in July

School coursework to be penalised for bad spelling

BY JOE JOSEPH

SCHOOLCHILDREN, who are being penalised already for failing to come up to scratch in spelling, punctuation and grammar in GCSE examinations, will in future pay for making similar mistakes in coursework as well.

At the moment, a bonus of up to 5 per cent can be added to a pupil's final exam marks as a reward for good spelling, punctuation and grammar. From September this year

will be extended to cover coursework, which will account for 20 to 40 per cent of an examinee's final tally, depending on the subject.

"We do a disservice to the schoolchildren of this country if we allow them to think 'sloppy' written work is acceptable," said Baroness Blatch, the education minister, when she announced the scheme yesterday. "Accurate writing skills are a basic re-

quirement of the world beyond school and employers are right to value them."

She hailed the government's new belt-and-braces plan to leave no word misspelt as "another example of raising expectations and therefore standards". Special arrangements will exempt dyslexic and handicapped pupils.

The campaign for improved spelling and grammar was launched by Kenneth Clarke when he was secretary of state for education and convinced that shoddy spelling was helping to undermine the country. He originally wanted five per cent points to be deducted from the exam marks of GCSE candidates, but examination boards preferred to reward smart spellers than to penalise wayward ones.

The government is also limiting the proportion of coursework in a GCSE examinee's final marks. Lady Blatch said: "It is very difficult to mark grades fairly if there is too much coursework. It is almost impossible to achieve consistency between grades given by course teachers for different items of coursework set all over the country." From this September, 40 per cent of the English GCSE will be based on course work, 30 per cent of the English literature exam, 30 per cent of science, and 20 per cent of mathematics.

This summer's GCSE results, due shortly, are the first to be weighted for accurate spelling and punctuation and will be monitored carefully by the School Examinations and Assessment Council.

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Conservative party headquar-

ters will be moving to soothe activists disgruntled over Europe and the length of the recession at the annual conference at Brighton.

Mr Norman Fowler, the party chairman, is likely to issue a "pep talk" to all constituency chairmen and agents next month to encourage them to turn away from internal disputes and focus the conference on celebrating the Conservatives' fourth electoral victory coupled with debates on the programme for the next term.

He appears to have been successful in settling an agenda which should prevent open rebellion over Europe and the economy. Instead criticism on these issues will be con-

signed chiefly to the fringes.

The agenda with 1,190 motions has also been formulated to make it difficult for representatives to link the future of Europe and the recession, via Britain's membership of the exchange-rate mechanism. While Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, and Norman Lamont, the chancellor, expect some trouble, they could draw the fire away from Mr Major personally.

The chairman of the bench, Dorothy Cutner, adjourned the case until October 27, when the defence case is expected to be heard.

Mr Nortey was remanded on unconditional bail.

Snake man accused of cruelty

BY DAVID YOUNG

A WITCH doctor was arrested in London after draping two pythons around his neck on a day when a woolly scarf would have been more appropriate.

Emmanuel Nortey, 53, of Bromley, Kent, known as Snakey Joe, has denied causing suffering and cruelly treating a royal python and an Indian python on March 19 by unreasonably exposing them in inclement weather, in a prosecution brought by the RSPCA.

He said that the Indian python normally came from warmer climates than Brit-

ain's. "It kept at a lower temperature, the most stressful thing for it is being taken from a warm to a cold environment," he told the court.

He said the snakes had been allowed to cool down considerably and it took them three days to get back to a normal temperature.

The chairman of the

bench, Dorothy Cutner, adjourned the case until October 27, when the defence case is expected to be heard.

Mr Nortey was remanded on unconditional bail.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Figures show rise in patient waiting lists

The number of people on hospital waiting lists rose by more than 11,000 in the three months after the election, according to provisional figures from the health department. More than 926,000 people are now waiting for an operation. Of those 1,244 have been waiting more than two years in spite of the government's pledge in its patient charter to clear the two-year backlog by April of this year (Alison Roberts writes).

While the overall number of patients waiting more than two years has been reduced and six of the 14 regional health authorities have eliminated their long-term lists altogether, some areas are still struggling to meet the government's target set last October. The number of those waiting between one and two years has increased by almost 3,000 — an increase of more than 3.7 per cent — while the number of patients waiting for less than 12 months rose by about 1 per cent to 843,210.

Announcing the figures yesterday, Tom Sackville, the health minister, said: "Although the number of patients waiting over one year rose slightly in the three months to the end of June, these patients still account for fewer than one in ten of the total number waiting." David Blunkett, the shadow health secretary, condemned the figures as the result of failed government promises. He said: "Today's figures offer a sharp resemblance to Britain's economic statistics — good news before the general election and the stark reality of failure after the election."

Two share chess lead

Grandmasters Julian Hodgson and Jonathan Mestel both won their games in the British chess championship in Plymouth to jointly lead with seven points out of eight (Raymond Keene writes). Hodgson faced a tough opponent in John Emms, but with Emms very short of time, Hodgson bluffed by sacrificing his queen. Unable to co-ordinate his thoughts Emms failed to find the winning line and was suddenly checkmated. Spectators described the victory as the chess equivalent of daylight robbery. By contrast, Mestel had little difficulty in converting an advantage against Aaron Summerscale. A point behind the joint leaders is the teenager Dharshan Kumar. Mark Hebden, Andrew Martin and John Emms are leading the pack with five and a half. There are 11 rounds to be played.

Dog captured in jet

A policeman donned an anti-rabies suit at Manchester airport yesterday to capture a Rhodesian ridgeback dog which had bitten through the bars of its cage and was running loose in the airliner's hold. The South African Airways jet from Johannesburg had earlier touched down at Paris but ground staff had refused to open the hold when they heard the dog leaping around. It was taken to the airport quarantine quarters. As an enquiry began into how the dog managed to break loose an SAA spokesman said: "The hold was not opened in Paris although they were aware the dog was loose. Paris telephoned Manchester. The ridgeback was being imported into Britain as a pet."

Nickell suspect cleared

The 26-year-old photographic student arrested by police in Liverpool in connection with the murder of Rachel Nickell on Wimborne Common four weeks ago was released by detectives last night and cleared of any link to the murder. Merseyside police said that he had now been arrested in connection with other matters and taken back to Liverpool. He would be questioned about the rape of a woman aged 19 in her home in Toxteth, Liverpool, on August 22 last year.

Chalker meets Kurds

Baroness Chalker, minister of overseas development, meeting Masoud Barzani, president of the Kurdish Democratic Party, when a seven-man delegation from the opposition Iraqi National Congress called at the Foreign Office yesterday after returning from talks in Washington. In an hour-long discussion, described as friendly and useful, the Iraqis voiced concern over the "terrible repression" of Shiites in southern Iraq. Lady Chalker said Britain was keeping in close contact with its allies over the situation. The Iraqis, who also included Jalal Talabani, a Kurdish leader, emphasised their commitment to pluralist democracy. Lady Chalker spoke of the need for unity among opponents of Saddam Hussein.

Love child inherits farm

Unemployed Wayne Jones, 23, inherited a 140 acre estate yesterday after proving through a DNA test that he was the love child of a wealthy dead farmer. The funeral of bachelor Emlyn Jones, 57, was delayed after a divorcee, Monica Jones, claimed he was the father of her son. The DNA test proved that Wayne was legally entitled to inherit the estate. The farmer's family were forced to halt his cremation two months ago after Monica claimed her son was his true heir. She said she had had a brief affair with Emlyn Jones 24 years ago and renewed the relationship two years ago, but her diabetic lover had died without leaving a will. Emlyn's brother, Billy Jones, a council worker, said Wayne had no right to inherit Tai, Canol Farm at Cynonville in West Glamorgan. Monica and Wayne will move into the farmhouse from their council flat.

Spy suspects detained

Officers from Scotland Yard's special branch were last night still questioning a couple arrested over allegations of possible espionage involving weapons technology and a former Iron Curtain country. The couple from Kingston upon Thames, southwest London, have been held at Paddington Green police station since the weekend.

AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP

The United States Department of State is conducting a Visa Lottery Program. 40,000 visas will be issued leading to American citizenship. The selection will be done randomly. The program is open only to persons born in, or married to persons born in, the following countries.

Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bermuda, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Great Britain, Guadeloupe, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, New Caledonia, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, San Marino, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia.

The application period is for one month only. Processing fee applicable.

CORRECTION

John Taylor is a junior minister in the Lord Chancellor's department, not in the Home Office as stated in yesterday's *Law Times*.

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Mother lay dying on floor for days while son, 12, ignored her

BY PETER VICTOR

A BOY aged 12 left his dying mother on the floor of their home for several days while he went out with friends. He told neighbours that his mother was out, an inquest was told yesterday.

When one of his friends told a neighbour that he had seen a body, the boy said that it was a blow-up dummy left by his father, who lived in America. He invited two friends to stay at the house in Acton, west London, while his mother, who was brain-damaged giving birth to him, was still lying on the floor. The friends eventually stayed with a neighbour because the boy said that his mother had not come home.

The woman died in Ham-

mersmith Hospital, west London, on February 11. Dr John Burton, the Hammersmith coroner, recorded a verdict of death by natural causes. He said the boy's action did not affect the cause of death: "She would have died anyway." Dr Burton ruled that the boy, now a ward of court, should not be named.

Dr Christopher Foster, the pathologist, said the woman, 45, died because of a stroke after rupturing a blood vessel. She had suffered from fits and black-outs; the inquest was told. In 1990 the High Court had awarded her £200,000 for brain damage during her son's birth.

A neighbour told the inquest that she had been un-

able to get a reply from the woman's house over several days. When she next saw the son, she asked how his mother was and he told her: "She is feeling much better and she even went out to do some shopping."

The son had a key to the flat and was seen going in and out, but spent much of his time in a video shop with friends. At school he was found to be carrying £70 and was said to have bought gifts for his friends, including a £75 computer and £45 trainers.

The neighbour said that she decided to enter the flat to see what was going on. "I saw him coming from his flat. I said, 'Where is your mum?' He said, 'Oh, didn't you pass her?' She was just up the road." I said, "I've had enough of your lies. Open that door." We went in. She was lying on the floor, just inside the front room."

The neighbour said that she called an ambulance and when the crew raised his mother, the boy screamed. "He was shaking and getting hysterical. The flesh from her knee, her hand and parts of her face were gone. I had to hold him until they took her away. She was just barely breathing. As far as I was concerned, she was clinically dead but was still breathing."

The neighbour said that the boy had since seen various doctors but had so far given no satisfactory explanation for his actions or talked about what happened during the time his mother was lying on the floor.

The dead woman's GP, Dr Helen Sapper, said in a written statement to the inquest:

"In 1980 she had a caesarean section for the birth of her only son who was born wrong and left her brain-damaged, which then led to protracted legal proceedings which left her suspicious of doctors and lawyers."

Mr Scanlan said she received letters from her son every five to six weeks but last saw him just before Christmas 1991 — about five months before his body was found on May 26 this year.

Pc Ian Strut, of Northolt police, said he was called to the Scanlan's house after a friend and neighbour, Andrew Taylor, became suspicious of not seeing the father and son and let himself in to their house. Shane was slumped across a chair in one room and Mr Scanlan's body was in a back room.

The fridge door was open and food was scattered across the floor. It was very messy, presumably from the lad who was looking for something to eat,"

Pc Strut said.

The inquest heard that Irish-born Mr Scanlan, an

unemployed security officer, had lived with Shane at the house in Kilowen Avenue, Northolt, for about two years since separating from his common law wife.

Mrs Scanlan told the hearing: "He always had Shane with him. People said they never saw Shane without Paul. He had a bicycle with a carrier on it and took Shane with him. Shane was very well looked after."

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Pc Strut said.

Shocking news for sole mates

BY ALAN HAMILTON

THE diminutive Korean who pounded 26 miles of Spanish streets at the weekend to win the Olympic marathon would make an excellent waiter.

Members of that profession cover an average of 60 miles during a five-day working week, the equivalent of 2.3 marathons, according to a survey conducted by a foot-care company which strapped pedometers to the ankles of a variety of professionals.

Postmen clocked up a mere 31 miles a week. Some, of course, climb blocks of flats, while others stroll the suburbs; the survey is silent on the nature of the terrain. Removal men were not far behind at 26 miles, although a piano is a greater load than a sack of junk mail and tax demands. Nurses notched up an average of 25 miles a week.

Housewives will be gratified to have confirmed what they know already, that domestic chores are hard on the feet. They clocked an average of 15 miles, rising to 20 when the job included the care of young children.

School, who commissioned the survey in the hope of promoting sales of a shock-absorbing shoe insert, calculates that each time a ten-stone adult takes a step, the foot is subjected to 200 lb of impact pressure.

Incidentally, at the bottom of the league are sales assistants in shops, who cover a meagre nine miles in a six-day working week.

WALKING AT WORK

Miles walked per week at work

Waiter/waitress	60
Shop "floor walker"	58
Postman	51
Departmental buyer	30
Removal man	28
Nurse	25
Housewife with small children	20
Housewife	15
Office worker	10
Sales assistant	9

Bank warns millions of credit card blunders

BY RAY CLANCY

THE National Westminster Bank's five million credit card customers were yesterday urged to check their statements for mistakes caused by a computer bug.

Pauline Hedges, of the British Banking Association, said that most errors, which included overcharging, had been corrected, but urged customers to check.

The bug has been cleared from the system and the problems should not recur.

Letters will be sent to customers about the mistakes since mid-July which include cards being retained by cash machines, bills settled by direct customers to check.

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Cuts in unemployment benefits

Lilley considers curb on long-term sick pay

BY JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

SOCIAL security ministers are considering ways to cut down on the rising cost of invalidity benefit, now valued at about £5 billion a year, as part of an attempt to contain spending on the unemployed.

Peter Lilley, the social security secretary, is said to be looking at ways of targeting the benefit, which goes to 1.4 million people who are unable to work due to long-term illness.

The Treasury and the social security department yesterday played down reports that ministers are in favour of cutting entitlement to unemployment benefit from a year to six months. While not ruling out that option in the longer term, Whitehall sources pointed out that such a change would require primary legislation and would be politically risky.

More than 600,000 people claim unemployment benefit, about 22 per cent of the jobless, getting £43.10 a week. However, 80 per cent are entitled to income support after 12 months. The remainder lose support because of

their spouse's earnings or the level of their savings.

Donald Dewar, the Opposition social security spokesman, said that to take away unemployment benefit after only six months would be a cynical cost-saving exercise.

Francis Maude, a former Treasury minister, speaking on Radio 4 yesterday, supported a review of unemployment benefit and suggested that "welfare" schemes, such as those in the United States, should be considered.

The cost of invalidity benefit has risen from £3.87 billion in 1989/90 to £5.6 billion this year, and is expected to rise to £7 billion in 1994/5. The contributory benefit costs nearly four times as much as unemployment benefit and the same amount as child benefit.

At present anyone who has been on statutory sick pay for 28 weeks is entitled to go on to invalidity benefit with a sick note from their GP. Ministers are concerned that GPs sometimes sign a form whether or not the applicant is entirely unfit for work.

One option being considered is to tighten up the medical checks needed to claim benefit. Although claimants can be asked to report to a benefit agency doctor to reassess their claim after several months, this can be vetoed by an individual's GP. Other options include reviewing the 28-week entitlement period or taxing the benefit. Longer-term measures include encouraging those who are well enough to do part-time work, with the employer and the social security department sharing the cost. Significant changes would require primary legislation but it is possible that tighter medical checks could be introduced before next April.

Although Mr Lilley is looking at ways of containing spending in his department, he is said to be committed to manifesto pledges for annual upratings in line with inflation for child benefit and retirement pensions. Mr Lilley is also said to be defending the benefits paid to the disabled as distinct from the long-term sick.



WPC Waters: she claims that her career was damaged

WPC 'assaulted' by colleague

A POLICEWOMAN who went for a walk with a male colleague on Valentine's day was seriously sexually assaulted when they returned to her home, an industrial tribunal heard yesterday.

Eileen Waters, 24, a woman police constable, claimed that after complaining about the attack she was victimised by the Metropolitan Police and her career was damaged.

She spoke out yesterday after she lost her claim for victimisation and sex discrimination against the Metropolitan Police. An industrial tribunal at Chelsea, west London, decided there was lack of evidence. It dismissed her application because the alleged assault happened while both officers were off duty.

Denis Brayden, the chairman, said there was nothing in the evidence he had heard to prove WPC Waters's claim that she was punished because of her complaint.

WPC Waters said that after finishing work at Harrow police station, northwest London, on February 14, 1988, she went for a walk with the male constable in Hyde Park. They returned to her room in police accommodation in nearby Marylebone Road, where

"serious sexual assaults" took place.

During an adjournment of the tribunal WPC Waters, who is now on sick leave, said her allegations were dealt with by Scotland Yard's complaints investigation bureau.

The male officer, who had worked with her at Harrow and had been off sick at the time, was not suspended. Neither was he disciplined after the Crown Prosecution Service decided he should not face charges.

She claimed that officers investigating the case adopted an aggressive and unsympathetic manner towards her.

In 1990 she obtained qualifications which enabled her to be transferred from normal duties and be attached to a special search team. But in July last year, despite receiving favourable appraisal reports, she was moved to the property office and told to "sort it out".

WPC Waters said she was told by senior officers that she was medically unfit for specialised duties, but was not given any proof to support that and had since been told she was unable to cope. She said that when she was on patrol duties male officers failed to respond when she summoned them for help.

Prisoners try to electrify barricade

BY RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

PRISONERS caused extensive damage yesterday at Lindholme jail, near Doncaster, South Yorkshire, as disturbances erupted for the third time in four years.

Twelve inmates barricaded themselves in a dormitory and smashed furniture during more than three hours of trouble at the jail, which was opened in 1986 to ease overcrowding in the penal system.

They tried to attach wires to barricades so that prison staff would be electrocuted when they attempted to regain control of the dormitory. Prison officers finally gained control of the room early yesterday morning. The ringleaders were held in the prison's segregation unit before being transferred to other jails.

The disturbances at the jail, which holds 700 prisoners, follow a report in January by Judge Tumlin, the chief inspector of prisons, who criticised bullying and intimidation among inmates.

Judge Tumlin called for the conversion of dormitories into individual cubicles and criticised management for its lethargy in preventing a sense of purpose developing in running the jail. He said that the jail was in need of great improvement, adding that managers were most concerned at the appalling dormitories.

The latest disturbances started in dormitories where there had been previous trouble and which a Home Office minister had promised in 1988 to replace with cubicles. Last night, a Home Office spokesman said: "In the new year we will start to do away with the dormitories and replace them with two-man cubicles."

In 1988 250 rioters went on the rampage for four hours. Last year 600 inmates rioted, starting fires in several wings and building barricades, and a week ago 30 inmates attempted to escape from the jail.

Gecas will not appeal

Antony Gecas, a Lithuanian living in Scotland, will not fight a court decision which said he was a war criminal.

Mr Gecas, a retired mining engineer, of Edinburgh, failed in a £600,000 defamation case against Scottish Television last month.

Lord Milligan, in his Court of Session decision, said he was "satisfied on the evidence that Mr Gecas participated in many operations involving the killing of innocent Soviet citizens, including Jews in particular".

David Jack, solicitor for Mr Gecas, said in a statement: "Mr Gecas rejects the judgment of the court, but is in no position to meet the financial implications of an appeal."

Potholer killed

A British potholer fell 60ft to his death while exploring a cave in the Cantabrian mountains, in Spain, local government officials said. Ellis Barker, 36, a Manchester teacher, had entered the Cuvio de la Renada cave near the Alas pass, about 20 miles southeast of Santander, with two Britons. Rescuers were trying to recover his body.

Owner fined

Barry Delaney, a businessman who admitted demolishing without permission part of a grade II listed barn at Bailey Fold Farm, in Allerton, West Yorkshire, was fined £2,500 and ordered to pay £320 costs by Bradford magistrates yesterday.

College blasts

John Llewellyn-Jones, a chemistry lecturer at Basildon College, Essex, was sent for trial at Chelmsford Crown Court charged with failing to take reasonable care for the safety of two students after two explosions in his laboratory.

Women seek car's practical features

BY NICHOLAS WATT

WOMEN take a far more pragmatic view of cars than men and are content to drive small models, says a survey.

While men often see cars as an extension of their masculinity, women see them in a utilitarian sense. Fancy gadgets have done little to impress them and they do not think much of electric windows and sophisticated music systems.

Renault's survey of 1,000 women found that they looked for practical features such as good brake systems. Half of the women (51 per cent) wanted reliable cars, while 16 per cent wanted a safe model.

Women do dream about driving luxury, performance cars. They also believe cars are more indispensable than washing machines but are not bothered about the

vehicle's environmental features.

Phil Horton, Renault's marketing director, said: "Women generally see cars as a part of their life but not as an outward sign of their influence or position."

The AA agreed with most of the survey, but a spokeswoman said: "Just judging by the type of cars women drive, they clearly don't see them as a status symbol. They also drive differently to men. Men make aggressive errors, like speeding, whereas women offend by bumping into the kerb."

Dame Barbara Cartland, who claims to have organised the first women's car race in 1932, agreed with the survey but felt it had missed an important point: "I know this will infuriate women, but they do drive extremely badly."

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Water firms rebuked by advertising watchdog

By MELINDA WITSTOCK, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

A WATER industry advertisement claiming that British drinking water is "the best in Europe" has been condemned as unsubstantiated by the Advertising Standards Authority.

The advertisement, which comes after criticism by the European Court of Justice, was also rebuked for claiming without substantiation that British drinking water meets World Health Organisation standards.

The authority has instructed the Water Services Association, representing the ten water companies of England and Wales, not to repeat the claims "unless adequate substantiation was available".

Friends of the Earth, which complained to the authority about the advertisement, said the authority's decision "will finally lay to rest the unsubstantiated claims by the UK water industry whenever a legitimate attempt is made to enforce the legal standards of drinking water".

Liana Stupple, FoE's water campaigner, said: "Much of the drinking water in the UK is not up to standard. It is indicative of the water industry's bunker mentality that they respond to legal enforcement with propaganda rather than action."

FOE said WHO guidelines for nitrates, lead and aluminium were the same, or more stringent, than EC requirements, yet British water had been found to exceed EC levels in some areas.

The WSA admitted to the authority that it did not have access to any comparative data, but said yesterday it knew of no other EC country which had as good a record as Britain in meeting EC drinking water standards.

The Drinking Water Inspectorate's annual report a fortnight ago said: "British

ADRIAN BROOKS



The Yorkshire 'golf balls' and their replacement

Radar 'golf balls' to be dismantled

Some celebrated pieces of hardware from Cold war days are to disappear, report John Young and Paul Wilkinson.

THE dismantling of the giant plastic "golf ball" radar domes at the Fylingdales early warning station on the North York moors will begin later this month.

Since they were installed nearly 30 years ago, the domes have become a familiar landmark and tourist attraction which at peak holiday periods jams the nearby narrow moorland road with traffic.

English Heritage recently considered listing them in its grade I category of buildings of outstanding architectural and historic interest, comparable with the nation's great castles, cathedrals and country houses.

Several people have offered to buy the domes since it became known that they were to be declared redundant. Squadron Leader Sherry Davies, a spokesman at RAF Fylingdales, said yesterday that there had been enquiries from two funfairs and another from a bird lover who thought a dome would make an ideal aviary.

He explained that they were not for sale as they belonged to the United States air force which planned to dismantle them and transport them to Turkey.

The domes were erected in 1964, when the Cold war was at its iciest, as part of the US strategic early warning chain. They enraged environmentalists, who considered them a monstrous intrusion on a wild and beautiful landscape within a national park, and peace campaigners.

There were "Ban the Bomb" demonstrations outside the

base, and the military guarded its top-secret station with dogs, barbed wire and armed patrols. Claims were made that radiation from the domes was a threat to human life, and there were even suggestions that heat from the rays would germinate the seeds of prehistoric plants dormant in the moorland peat.

During the Cold war the three radar scanners inside the domes, capable of spotting an object the size of a biscuit tin over Moscow, would have given Britain just four minutes' warning of incoming Soviet nuclear missiles. They were still in use during the Gulf war, but modern technology has allowed them to be replaced by a single piece of equipment housed within a new pyramid-shaped steel and aluminium building.

English Heritage's interest in the "golf balls" ended after a recent site visit, when its inspector discovered that they were not the originals.

The hexagonal glass fibre panels, six inches thick, filled with a honeycomb of reinforced paper and joined by aluminium bolts, had been replaced between 1982 and 1984 by triangular panels with a thin plastic skin stretched over them, which were apparently not deemed worthy of preservation.

Val Dibdin, planning officer for the North York Moors national park, said permission for the new pyramid had been made conditional upon the domes being removed.

But John Greenway, Conservative MP for Ryedale, said he thought that the public would miss them.



Boxers saluted: Dublin's Michael Carruth, with his family, holds up his Olympic gold medal from a bus as 20,000 people in the city celebrated his return yesterday for a civic reception with Wayne McCullough, of Belfast, who won silver David Miller, page 24

Council tenants opt out

By RACHEL KELLY
PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

TENANTS on some of Liverpool's most run-down council estates voted yesterday to opt out of local authority control and to become a housing action trust.

The inhabitants of 67 tower blocks, comprising 5,337 homes, voted 82 per cent in favour of forming Britain's third housing action trust and for a £100 million refurbishment programme that will take them out of the hands of Liverpool City Council. Only four of the city's 71 tower blocks voted to keep the council as its landlord and to reject the government's scheme.

Housing action trusts were set up as part of the 1988 Housing Act. Their responsibilities last for between five and ten years. The refurbishment programme in Liverpool is intended to be completed in seven to ten years.

The ballot was carried out between July 20 and August 5, with 78.7 per cent of tenants voting. A total of 521 tenants voted against the scheme.

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Seventy two acres acquired at Malham Cove as army of visitors marches in

ASADOR GUZELIAN

Trust buys Yorkshire beauty spot

Mounting pressure from day-trippers makes the National Trust's latest purchase timely, reports Ronald Faux

SEVENTY TWO of the most heavily trodden acres in Britain below Malham Cove in the Yorkshire Dales National Park have been acquired by the National Trust. Lord Healey of Riddlesden, president of the trust's Yorkshire moors and dales appeal, announced the news yesterday as the daily influx of visitors began to arrive at the village of Malham. Some 750,000 people explore the area each year.

A donation from the Kensington and Chelsea Centre for the National Trust and funds from the Countryside Commission made the acquisition possible. The rolling fields bounded by dry-stone walls leading to the natural amphitheatre of the cove were

bought from a local farmer whose cattle will still graze there.

"This is exactly the sort of land the National Trust was set up to care for," Lord Healey said. "It has some of the finest scenery in the Dales, but like many places it is feeling the pressure of tourism, just the sort of land the National Trust was set up to care for."

He first set eyes on the cove when he was aged six and has loved the place ever since. "I came here with my father who was in charge of Keighley Technical College. I was with my younger brother Terry who was carried while I had to walk."

Not only is the area under enormous pressure from day visitors but the Pennine Way, among the most popular long-distance walks in Britain, runs across the fields. The way is marked by a gravel path that climbs the hill to the west of the cove where King's Water Babies swam in a beck springing mysteriously from a sheer rock wall. The cove itself was vested to the people of Malham in the nineteenth century.

The National Trust has



Bright outlook: day-trippers enjoy the view near Malham, North Yorkshire. As well as its natural beauty, the area possesses rich archaeological remains



Fighting breaks out after gypsy weddings

By BILL FROST

PUNCHES were thrown and knife fights broke out among 250 gypsies early yesterday after two wedding celebrations.

The guests had returned to their temporary site after parties which left a hotel in Luton, Bedfordshire, "wrecked". Violence flared as all the gypsies tried to leave the area through two narrow exits. Police in riot gear were drafted in as the wedding guests rammed each other's caravans and exchanged blows on the Milton Keynes site. A lorry was set alight and several other vehicles were damaged as fighting continued.

A fire officer's car was destroyed as a lorry ploughed through a hedge. Gypsies later peleted fire engines with stones as they arrived to deal with the blaze.

Seven police officers later accompanied a group of injured gypsies to Milton Keynes General Hospital. Three arrests were made at the site.

A police spokesman said: "They all got home in the small hours and everyone decided to hitch their wagons and move on to pastures new at the same time. Unfortunately there were only two small exits from the site and with a couple of hundred vehicles trying to get out, it soon got out of hand. They were ramming each other and driving through hedges to get out."

The spokesman added: "It would have been foolish to have gone on to the site. They were fighting among themselves so we just let them get on with it. We are monitoring their whereabouts in case they stay in one large group and converge on another area." Officers had attempted to take statements about the mêlée but the bruised and hung-over revellers had been less than co-operative.

Minister takes the train to hear commuter grumbles

By NICHOLAS WATT

WITH notepad in hand and an earnest look on his face, Roger Freeman, the transport minister, braved the London, Tilbury and Southend train service yesterday to hear commuters' complaints about Britain's second worst railway line.

The man who said earlier this year that secretaries have their own "cheap and cheerful" class of train looked contrite as he mingled among the early morning Essex commuters at Pitsea station. "I'm here to listen to you. The quality of the service is not acceptable," he said.

Commuters hardly needed reminding. They complained about filthy carriages, late trains and a hopeless information service.

Before Mr Freeman had a chance to take notes, one commuter leant out of her carriage window and, as her train drew away, shouted: "You should come on this line more often. It's disgusting and I have to spend fortune on dry-cleaning."

Mr Freeman's style was courteous, if a little aloof, on his journey from Pitsea to Fenchurch Street, with stops at Basildon and Laindon stations. Martyn Ramm, chairman of the Basildon Commuters' Association, said: "This is a dreadful service and people feel so strongly that we recently presented the government with a petition signed by 4,500 people." Mr Freeman took notes.

At the end of each commuter's rant, he checked he had understood the complaints and then outlined his plans for the line. "One way the service can be improved is to bring in the private sector and this line is a real candidate for the first private franchise in 1994 by leasing trains. If you can lease planes and coaches, why not do the same with trains? I've already started talking to the City about this," he said.

Some commuters were not impressed with Mr Freeman's performance. His comment about secretaries still runs

largest percentage of revenue to Network SouthEast. This line has been dismal for years," he said.

Mr Freeman thought the exercise worthwhile and nursed no more than a bruised leg after a carriage door struck him as a train drew into Basildon station.

"I think the journey was a proper discharge of my duties. It's the middle of August and I'm meant to be on holiday. I spoke to 35 passengers and have heard a catalogue of concerns ranging from cleanliness to reliability. The line is BR's poor relation."

He saw how unreliable the service was when two of the three trains were late and the one from Basildon to Laindon was cancelled. "The journey will not be contributing to the punctuality target," he said.

Although he was delayed, Mr Freeman will not be able to claim any money back on his £5.30 ticket. Under BR's passenger's charter, Network SouthEast trains have to be delayed for an hour to qualify for compensation. Even though one train was cancelled Mr Freeman would still not qualify as he was travelling on a commuter line.



Track record: Roger Freeman gets travellers' views

'Save peat bogs' charter launched

By KERRY GILL

CONSERVATIONISTS are to urge councils throughout Scotland to help to save endangered peatlands, many of which are considered important internationally. The move is part of a nationwide campaign to save peat bogs and to restrict the greenhouse effect on the atmosphere.

The Scottish Wildlife Trust wants councils to sign a protection charter that would make Scotland a "peat protection zone". Those signing will be committing themselves to phasing out the use of peat in landscaping and horticulture, to promoting the use of peat substitutes and to calling on the government to develop a strategy for saving peatlands.

The launch of the charter will coincide with the trust's "national bog day" next Sunday when several peat moss wildlife reserves will be opened to the public.

Nigel Doar, the trust's campaign co-ordinator, said: "With current and likely advances in the peat alternatives market, it should be perfectly feasible for local authorities to phase out their use of peat extracted from sites of special scientific interest by the end of 1993, and to phase out the use of horticultural peat altogether by the end of 1994."

The trust manages more than 80 reserves covering 18,000 hectares in Scotland and is a member of the Peatlands Conservation Consortium for the protection of Britain's peatlands.

The trust says that peat bogs are important habitats for rare organisms. They act as natural filters and water level regulators, maintaining the flow of clean water to streams and rivers, and supporting fish stocks.

Mr Doar said: "A living bog acts as a valuable 'sink' for carbon dioxide. If it is drained, this releases the gas into the atmosphere, adding to the greenhouse problem."

The Twelfth dawns less than gloriously

Grouse shooting, which sustains many in the Highlands, this year threatens to be a disappointment, Kerry Gill writes

THE "Glorious Twelfth" of August dawned to the crackle of guns from the moors of Derbyshire to the hills of Sutherland, but for almost every shooting party today's bag promises to be a disappointment.

Britain's 460 grouse moors, most of them in Scotland, expect a 20 per cent drop in the number of birds shot from today until the season ends on December 10. The annual bag is expected to fall to around 350,000, largely due to poor weather earlier in the year, predators and disease. Some estates have been forced to cancel shoots.

The decline in grouse populations over the past two decades has done nothing to put off an increasing number of Americans, Germans, French and Italians prepared to pay up to £1,000 for a day's shoot on Scotland's prime estates. As they join their hosts over a robust luncheon of wine, whisky and sandwiches, they will probably give little thought to the benefits they bring to the local economy. Without the grouse shoots, many small communities could not exist.

Last year, John Tinsley, who owns the 10,000-acre Corybrough estate near Tomatin, welcomed about 200 "paying guests" to his moors. Having one of the best shoots in the Highlands, Mr Tinsley can command near top prices for a day's sport in a good year. Prospects this year, he said, were poor. Some estates can raise as much as £250,000 during the grouse season, although few owners will admit to making much of a profit, pointing to the prodigious upkeep of an estate.

Corybrough employs three full-time keepers, accounting for about £30,000 in wages. It pays out £20,000 in business rates and has to find between £15,000 and £20,000 a year to maintain estate roads. On top of those south of the border is essential. Work on the estate is farmed out to local contractors, plant hire firms, garages and quarries. The keepers and their families are directly supported by the estate, and hotels and shops benefit from the visitors, who often stay for several days with their families.

Hotels in the Highlands, which depend on local young people for staff, could not remain open throughout the year without the cash generated from shooting parties. Without the paying guests a landowner could not support his keepers and their families.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Six held in £2.5m drug raid

Armed detectives seized cannabis resin worth £2.5 million in a series of raids early yesterday.

The operation involved up to 60 officers from the regional crime squad and Customs and Excise. Six men, aged between 20 and 40, from the London area, Essex and Hertfordshire, were arrested and half a ton of cannabis was recovered from a vehicle. Two of those held were on a yacht recently arrived in Fowey, Cornwall, from Spain.

Sub hunted

Bill Garrett, from New Jersey, the great grandson of the man who designed the first powered submarine, hopes to lead an expedition to find the vessel, which sank off north Wales in February 1880. The *Resurgam* was powered by steam and had been tested by its designer, George Garrett, a Manchester clergyman. It sank in a storm while under tow to Gosport for Admiralty sea trials.

Flights cleared

A new British airline, First European, has been granted licences to start flying scheduled services from Gatwick to Paris and Nice in the autumn. The airline must satisfy the CAA of its financial fitness and obtain an operator's certificate.

Pottery found

Roman-British pottery nearly 2,000 years old has been found at a National Trust car park at Duckpool, near Bude, Cornwall. Other finds include an oven and a stone-lined pit.

Double vision

Minutes after workmen had finished painting 40mph speed limit signs on a road near Brockenhurst, Hampshire, a second group of contractors hired by the county council arrived to resurface the same spot.

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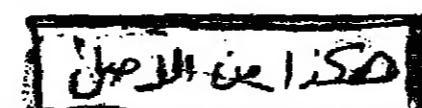
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Warring groups seek to exploit peace force as Serbs widen gains

AS THE United Nations Security Council and Nato planners debate the use of force to deliver humanitarian aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina, they are finding that the regional alliances are expert political manipulators. They will attempt to cajole, provoke or blackmail any international force into furthering their own aims.

Fearing intervention, hardline Bosnian Serb leaders are now rushing to expel about 28,000 Muslims to finish the job of "ethnically cleansing" northern Bosnia. As some Serb detention centres are closed, former inmates are bound to be among those awaiting deportation.

While Muslims and Croats have, like the Serbs, set up detention centres and traded hostage populations, the Serbs have held more prisoners and burnt more villages. This is because while there were large Muslim populations inland covered by the Serbs, there have been few Serbs in the territory that the Croats want.

The armed forces of the self-proclaimed Serbian republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina are

now believed to control 70 per cent of Bosnia, even though Serbs represent only 31 per cent of the population.

With hundreds of thousands of Muslims and Croats fleeing or being expelled from areas under their control, the Serbs will soon want to stop fighting. They will then offer help to aid convoys because they will have almost everything they want and be sure that thanks to their reign of terror, Muslim refugees and deportees will never return.

However, the fighting is unlikely to stop as Croats and Muslims will try to roll back the Serb army.

If Serb gains or artillery positions are seriously threatened by foreign intervention, Bosnian Serb leaders are promising revenge. Alekse Buh, minister of foreign affairs of the Bosnian Serb republic, has said: "Throughout Europe we have volunteers, including kamikaze pilots, ready to attack nuclear power plants." Remaining pockets of resistance that the Serbs need to crush are the strategically important

POLITICAL GOALS

There are fears that, when the UN forces intervene, the Serbs will hold on to the areas they wanted. Tim Judah writes

Gorazde in the east and Bihać in the northwest.

Since the Serb-dominated Yugoslav Army bequeathed Bosnian Serbs a vast arsenal including warplanes, Radovan Karadžić, the Bosnian Serb leader, has been given the capacity to fight without relying on Belgrade.

Embriled in the Bosnian conflict are fighters from Serb held territories in Croatia. These enclaves, known as the republic of Serbian Krajina, are now under the control of the United Nations Protection Force (Unprofor). Former soldiers who now wear the uniforms of the Krajina militia (police) were involved in fighting in northern Bosnia through which they drove a vital corridor, needed to link their enclaves with Serbia.

A month ago regular Cro-

atian Army troops retreated from northern Bosnia and the corridor fell to the Serbs. They had been spearheading units of Bosnian Croats who have their own army, the Croatian Defense Council.

However, over the past few days there have been reports of attacks from Croatia indicating that the corridor battle is not yet over. The Croats want to cut the corridor in order to throttle the supply lines of Serbian Krajina.

The Croats of Bosnia-Herzegovina, 17 per cent of the population, are divided between those who are in favour of an independent republic and the nationalists from western Herzegovina who favour union with Croatia.

Three days ago, ten members of a Croat nationalist militia known as HOS were



shot dead by Bosnian Croat soldiers. Herzegovinian Croat leaders under Mati Boban have declared their own mini-state known as the Croatian Community of Herzeg-Bosnia. Its leadership is close to Croatian President Tudjman, who dreams of recreating the frontiers of the planned autonomous Croatia of 1939. HOS wants to re-create the frontiers of the Croatian Nazi puppet state of 1941, which included

the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The death of the HOS men was certainly linked to a disagreement over the fate of the eastern Herzegovinian town, Trebinje. From here Serbs have been attacking Dubrovnik in Croatia since last October. Croatian troops want to take the hills between Trebinje and Dubrovnik but HOS units are believed to be trying to take the town itself.

The Croatian government wants a full-scale foreign military intervention against Serbs and Serbia. This view is shared by the now Muslim dominated Bosnian government led by President Alija Izetbegović.

Muhammed Sacirbey, Bosnia's ambassador to the UN, described the proposition to use force to bring in aid as a plan to "fatten up (Bosnians) before the slaughter".

Of all three parties, the Bosnian Muslims, 44 per cent of the pre-war population, now have the least interest in a quick end to the war. "We are afraid that if international forces come to the region we will not be able to fight for our liberation," Mile Almazic, the secretary-general of the Bosnian presidency, said.

Muslims fear that any settlement now will leave them with small scraps of a Serbo-Croatian partitioned republic into which will flow hundreds of thousands of refugees.

For months there have been isolated reports of clashes between Bosnian Muslim soldiers and Bosnian Croats. The

latest comes from Kiseljak which lies on the Split-to-Sarajevo land corridor. For the first time, Croatian Radio and President Tudjman have begun to talk about the threat of an Islamic state in Europe, echoing the official line of Bosnia's Serbs and the leadership in Belgrade.

Opposed to the use of force in Bosnia are the UN peacekeepers whose mandate, apart from securing Sarajevo airport, is the demilitarisation and control of Serb-held territories in Croatia. Officials point out that if an international force begins to fight Serbs their position will be untenable. The existing humanitarian air bridge to Sarajevo will probably collapse and the UN peacekeepers in Krajina could become targets of Serbian wrath.

High-level grumbling can be overheard in the corridors of Unprofor's headquarters alleging that President Bush "needs to bomb someone" to boost his flagging election campaign.

Strategy for Bosnia, page 19

French lead the way with offer of ground troops for Bosnia

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

MILITARY officials from the Western European Union, the nine-nation defence organisation, are due to meet in Rome tomorrow to ascertain who is prepared to send troops to protect humanitarian aid convoys through Bosnia-Herzegovina. The response is expected to be limited.

The only WEU member which has already made it clear that ground troops will be made available is France. All the other members, including Britain, envisage more of a supporting role. French defence ministry sources said yesterday that the number of troops in the area could be boosted to more than 5,000 if a request was made for an expanded military presence.

France currently has 3,000 troops working with the Uni-

ited Nations in Croatia and Bosnia. One infantry battalion of about 900 men is in Serb-ruled Krajina, along the border with Bosnia, monitoring military in the area and protecting Bosnian refugees.

There is also a logistics battalion, serving the whole UN peacekeeping force, running supplies from Zagreb and Belgrade, and another battalion in Sarajevo.

Yesterday France also said it would send Awacs early warning planes, to monitor the Adriatic. The sources in Paris said that a force of 1,000 soldiers equipped with light armoured vehicles was ready to leave for the area within 24 hours to help protect land-

convoys and another 1,000 troops could be ready to leave within a fortnight. France also has nine helicopters on standby, five Gazelles for observation and three Pumas for transporting troops.

British contingency planning has focused on supplying logistical support, such as communications and further medical personnel to add to the 300 members of the field ambulance unit already in Croatia. However, it is becoming increasingly likely that Britain will eventually agree to supplying ground troops as well — probably an armoured reconnaissance regiment of about 600 men — to protect the convoys. Britain might also supply Harrier and Jaguar aircraft to provide air cover for the humanitarian convoys.

German defence ministry sources said that Bonn would not be sending troops or any other form of military assistance to Bosnia or Croatia. Even military drivers have been discounted because of the constitutional difficulties over sending troops abroad. Germany's contribution will be restricted to the one warship in the Adriatic and the regular aid flights from Zagreb to Sarajevo. However, it might be possible to help with logistics from Italy, if the Italian government agreed.

Holland is to consider its possible contribution over the next two days. A letter is being sent to parliament from the defence ministry and foreign affairs ministry outlining the role the Dutch could play. Although no decision has been made, it seems likely that Dutch participation will be restricted to logistical support, rather than infantry.

Italian foreign ministry sources said the government was waiting to see what requests were made by the UN before contemplating a role for Italy's forces. However, the sources emphasised the traditional role that in peacekeeping missions countries which bordered the region of conflict were generally excluded from providing troops.

Belgian foreign affairs ministry sources said that Belgium already had 600 troops serving in the northeastern part of Croatia with the UN and felt that was a significant contribution.

WEU sources said that Spain and Portugal were expected to send only "token forces", if there was a UN request for more military assistance.

Captain Markovic is from Kosovo, the southern Serbian province overwhelmingly populated by Albanians and the cradle of Serbian nationalism. "When the army pulled out and I decided to stay behind they rang up my family and said I had become an enemy of the Serbian people. It was a difficult decision but, if I had left, my conscience would have bothed me for the rest of my life."

Most Serbs have left Bihać, where they were a small minority, many of whom were army families. "My mother was furious. She said I must have become a Muslim and joined the (Muslim militia) Green Berets." Captain Markovic sports the stylish blue T-shirt of the Bosnian Army. "This is the first time in their history that the Serbs have been on the side of evil. Must be bad karma."

DEFENCE

Back in town Captain Markovic's Croatian comrade-in-arms explained one of the ways that the Serb-dominated "Bihać pocket" acquires arms. Buying them from the Serbs, of course. Tomislav Dretar, the round, bearded leader of a small unit of local Croat soldiers was a poet before the war. "People who have something to offer know each other," chuckles Mr Dretar. "I bought an anti-aircraft gun for £1,350 from a Serb officer who had stolen it. It was a face-to-face deal. He smuggled it in here piece by piece over five days."

YUGOSLAV factions, shaken by world outrage over humanitarian conditions in the former federation, are allowing more relief convoys through than before, a UN aid official said on Tuesday.

"We're able to move more and more food by land," says Sylvana Foa, the spokeswoman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), told a news conference in Geneva.

Land convoys, combined with more expensive air flights, have enabled severe hunger to



Faceless fighter: a Bosnian Serb irregular soldier, hiding his identity behind a balaclava, is taking cover during the continuing Serbian onslaught on the Muslim town of Konjic, in eastern Herzegovina, yesterday

Militiamen allow in more relief convoys

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

YUGOSLAV factions, shaken by world outrage over humanitarian conditions in the former federation, are allowing more relief convoys through than before, a UN aid official said on Tuesday.

"We're able to move more and more food by land," says Sylvana Foa, the spokeswoman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), told a news conference in Geneva.

Land convoys, combined with more expensive air flights, have enabled severe hunger to

be averted or alleviated throughout most of the former Yugoslav republic of Bosnia.

Major Muhammed Kresevija

AID EFFORT

ovic in Sarajevo said on Monday the city's flour supply was nearly gone and supplies were "a matter of life and death". But Sylvana Foa said there was plenty of flour.

Land convoys, combined with more expensive air flights, have enabled severe hunger to

250,000 to 300,000, could become another Sarajevo.

She said three trucks carrying medicine, 24 tonnes of flour and 10 tonnes of fish, cooking oil and cheese arrived on Saturday, the first convoy since July 6.

Meanwhile, the European Commission said yesterday that it is urgently trying to tighten a trade embargo against Yugoslavia by checking trucks transiting Serbia to ensure that no goods are illegally delivered inside the country.

The Medoc area was the hardest hit, notably around the communities of Margaux, Valeyrac, Quercy, Begaud and Gallian, the centre reported. The damage comes a year after a brutal spring frost destroyed much of the 1991 vintage.

Helicopter raid

Ajaccio: Thieves using a hijacked helicopter stole 10 million francs (£1 million) from a waiting aircraft at Bastia airport, Corsica, police said. The thieves held crew and passengers at gunpoint while searching for bags of the company Securipost, a mail service which transports money.

Rebels attack

Moscow: Nearly 150 armed rebels in western Georgia attacked police in two separate raids, killing one officer, Tass reported. Ten officers were taken hostage in the village of Tskhortschi. (Reuters)

'Mutants' kill

Moscow: Hundreds of people poisoned and dozens killed in Russia and Ukraine this summer may have been the victims of a "mutant" strain of toadstool which has an appearance similar to harmless, edible mushrooms. (Reuters)

Greens protest

Amsterdam: Environmentalists are campaigning to block the sale of a white chrysanthemum, Europe's first genetically engineered flower, because they fear damage to other plants through cross-pollination. (Reuters)

Russia displays its jet fighters for sale

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

Russia yesterday opened a hitherto closed region of the Moscow district and displayed the fruits of a dozen or more top-secret research institutes in an attempt to interest Western buyers in one of the country's few marketable manufactures — aeroplanes. For the rest of this week the previously secret Zhukovsky aerodrome, 25 miles east of Moscow, is staging Russia's first commercial air show, culminating at the weekend with a flying display that will be open to Russians and foreigners alike.

Opening the show, Aleksandr Rurikov, the vice-president and former air force pilot, described the event as

sales delegations. Western aircraft competitors, he said, have a clear goal tooust Russia from all sectors.

Yesterday, the opening day of the Moscow air show, all planes in production in Russia, including the latest MiG and Sukhoi fighters and the Buran space shuttle, were lined up in a half-mile row on the tarmac. Strategically placed ladders allowed visitors to inspect the cockpits, and notices displayed each plane's vital statistics: size, top speed, take-off and landing distances — information until recently classified, even for civilian passenger aircraft.

As well as the latest fighter

planes, there were the giant cargo planes, used through the winter to bring Western aid to Russia, amphibious planes that service the northern oil and gas pipelines, down to microlights and hang-gliders. In the view of some specialists, the most marketable of all the planes on display were the tiny executive jets cheaper than their Western equivalents.

No one could forget that the planes were being displayed in what used to be the Soviet Union. There was almost no advertising. Finding out where and when the show would take place was like a treasure hunt with clues scattered around Moscow.

Appointments in war on Mafia renew Rome political passions

FROM PHILIP WILLAN IN ROME

ITALIAN judicial authorities have appointed an interim head of the new national anti-Mafia prosecutor's office and removed the much criticised chief public prosecutor of Palermo in a climate of controversy bedeviling the state's war on organised crime.

The appointment of Giuseppe Di Gennaro, a respected judge in the Court of Cassation, the country's highest court, was announced on Monday. He is a former director of the United Nations body responsible for fighting the international drug trade. Critics pointed out that Si-

gnor Di Gennaro, kidnapped by left-wing terrorists in 1975, did not have the ten years' experience as an investigating magistrate or public prosecutor required by law.

Even more controversial was the decision by the Superior Council of the Magistrature (CSM), the governing body of Italian magistrates, to transfer Pietro Giannuzzo, Palermo's chief public prosecutor, to the Court of Cassation in an attempt to placate his colleagues, angered at the failure to protect the top Mafia investigators. Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino, killed in

bomb attacks. The CSM accused Luciano Sanudo of indirect responsibility for Borsellino's death and accused him of blocking the work of both Falcone and Borsellino.

Tensions were further heightened by the decision of the justice minister, Claudio Martelli, to open an investigation into the activities of Agostino Cordova, chief public prosecutor in the Calabrian town of Palermo and a candidate to succeed Signor Di Gennaro as the country's chief anti-Mafia investigator.

Furious Bush brands as lie report of 1984 affair with secretary

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Bush, transparently livid, last night denounced as a lie a newspaper report that claimed that as vice-president he had an extra-marital affair with his former appointments secretary.

In a riveting exchange during a live press conference in Kennebunkport with Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister, the president damned the television reporter who dared to confront him with the report. Mr Bush rebuked her for asking such a "sleazy question", declared that he was outraged, and insisted: "It's a lie."

Rumours of an affair between Mr Bush and the secretary, Jennifer Fitzgerald, have long titillated Washington, but the tabloid *New York Post* yesterday became the first newspaper to make the charge publicly with a named source in a three-page report, including a six-inch front-page headline: The Bush Affair.

The article, published just six days before the Republican convention, was based largely on third-hand information and was denounced as "total trash" by the Bush campaign.

The Clinton camp had certainly made it abundantly

clear that it would respond in kind if the Republicans raised the Flowers allegations. Aides have urged reporters to investigate the Fitzgerald rumours. Hillary Clinton fired a warning shot in the May issue of *Vanity Fair* by alluding directly to the president's "Jennifer", as opposed to her own husband's Jennifer.

The *Post* story was based on an interview purportedly given by Louis Fields, former US arms control ambassador in Geneva, details of which appear in a footnote in a new book titled *Power House* by Susan Trento, former chief staff aide to a Republican congressman. According to Mrs Trento, Mr Fields lunched with her husband Joe, then an investigative reporter with Cable News Network, two years before the ambassador's death in 1988. He told him of what the *Post* called a "Swiss tuya" between Mr Bush and Ms Fitzgerald in 1984, while the vice-president was on an official visit to Geneva and Barbara Bush was on a book promotion tour in the US.

Mr Fields allegedly said he was asked to arrange for the pair to use a private guest house during their visit. They stayed in adjoining bedrooms, there was no household staff, and he had to "help make certain arrangements for the laundry, that kind of thing". He is quoted as saying: "It became clear to me that the vice-president and Ms Fitzgerald were romantically involved and this was not a business visit. It made me very uncomfortable. After I left the government, I realised how serious all this was."

Rumours that the *Post* was about to divulge details of a Bush affair caused a Wall Street panic during the 1988 presidential election, but they were quashed by the president's eldest son, George, who told *Newsweek* that "the answer to the big A (adultery) question is NO."

Ms Fitzgerald was abroad yesterday. Mrs Bush told reporters at her holiday home that "fortunately" she had not seen the *Post* report.

Scoop US media refused to break

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

THE tale of "the other Jennifer", the scoop that never quite materialised, has followed President Bush for more than a decade. Never substantiated, the subject of allusion but never investigation, rumours of extra-marital infidelity in the president's past have been discussed so often in the back parlours of Washington that they long ago reached the status of accepted fact. Still the American media declined to explore the matter.

That has now changed, with the decision by *The New York Post* to publish assertions by a former — and now dead — US ambassador that he arranged a romantic tryst for the then Vice-President George Bush and a top aide, Jennifer Fitzgerald, at a Swiss guest house in 1984. American journalists

tendency from which President Bush has, until now, benefited.

In the past more time has been spent discussing why the president's possible infidelity has not been discussed, than discussing it. In February one of the country's leading political journalists, R.W. Apple of *The New York Times*, referred to Jennifer Fitzgerald at a university seminar and later said on television: "It is not a name that is unknown in any newsroom in Washington, any political salon in Washington, any congressional office. It is known everywhere, and it is not used." Whispers of Mr Bush's extra-marital excursions long predate his 1988 campaign, usually focusing on Ms Fitzgerald, who joined Mr Bush's staff shortly after the Watergate scandal.

Also in 1988, when Gary Hart's bid for the presidency failed after evidence of his romantic link to Donna Rice, a journalistic code of some sort appeared to have been established, and many expected similar allegations to appear about Mr Bush and Jennifer Fitzgerald.

The long-running ethical debate within the American media over whether to publish stories of extra-marital affairs by public figures has boiled down to the vague conclusion that those who claim purity of word and deed should be judged by those standards — a rather pointless distinction since no politician has ever run for office while admitting to being a philandering, drunken crook.

Bill Clinton has managed to defuse much of the poison in the Flowers scandal with a "nobody's perfect" defence, a strategy not open to Mr Bush, whose campaign so far has been fuelled largely by self-referential appeals to "traditional family values".

President Bush and his advisers may not want to believe that the American media is prepared to print such allegations, but as most of the country's newspapers yesterday prepared to follow up the *Post's* Bush had Swiss tryst" story, they no longer appear to have a choice.

Rice romantically linked to Gary Hart.

tend to give one of two reasons to explain why "the affair thing" has never before seen the clear light of day: one is the fear that such an explosive story would jeopardise relations between the White House and whichever news organisation broke the story; the other is that there has hitherto been little to investigate. The fact that President John Kennedy could enjoy a quite startling string of extra-marital affairs without media comment is often cited as evidence of an earlier moral code; in fact, it has more to do with the American media's traditional reluctance, for reasons of patriotism more than morality, to explore the presidential sex life. This is a

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Husain emerges as Middle East peace broker

The king is setting the pace for the turn to democracy in Jordan and steering the Arab world towards stability, writes Richard Beeston from Amman

When King Husain surveys Amman from his hilltop Basman palace, he can afford a little self-indulgent pride at the sight of the orderly capital below him.

Exactly 40 years ago, when the 17-year-old prince came to the throne, the dusty little outpost on the eastern heights of the Jordan Valley would barely have qualified for town status and its prospects, as well as that of the new monarch, looked bleak in the turbulent world of the Middle East.

Today, however, Amman's suburban calm stands out from the overcrowding of Cairo, the disintegration of Beirut, the decay of Damascus and the over-development of Tel Aviv. Similarly, the young cadre from Sandhurst has also matured into the longest-serving ruler in the Middle East.

Jordan's commentators lost no time yesterday in praising their ruler. "The king counts among the top statesmen of the world," Nasser Tahboub, a professor of political science, said. "If one is to apply a scale of 0 to 10, then the king deserves the full 10 points."

With that sort of praise it is hardly surprising that the Jordanian monarch allowed himself a small dose of self-congratulation this week when he reprimanded Arab regimes for resisting change and urged them to adopt Jordan's reforms towards democracy.

The king counts among the top statesmen of the world," Nasser Tahboub, a professor of political science, said. "If one is to apply a scale of 0 to 10, then the king deserves the full 10 points."

"We realise that we exist in a non-oil-producing land, but we have built a coherent society and we have set the basis for our pioneering democratic experiment," King Husain said in a speech to the Royal War Academy.

His optimism is in contrast to the past two years of his rule when Jordan has seen itself isolated in the Arab world and the West for its support of President Saddam Hussein of Iraq during the Gulf war.

Although King Husain is still feuding with Saudi Arabia and Egypt, he has begun to emerge from his isolation: a point made by his visit this year to Washington to meet President Bush and recent attempts to distance himself from Iraq by cutting down on the supply of goods travelling to Baghdad through Jordan.

Yet King Husain, 57, now faces what is possibly his greatest challenge as Jordan prepares to take a leading role in the Middle East peace talks, due to reconvene on August 24 in Washington. More than any other participant, the Hashemite kingdom is regarded by Arabs and Israelis alike as the catalyst to bringing a peaceful solution to the Palestinian problem.

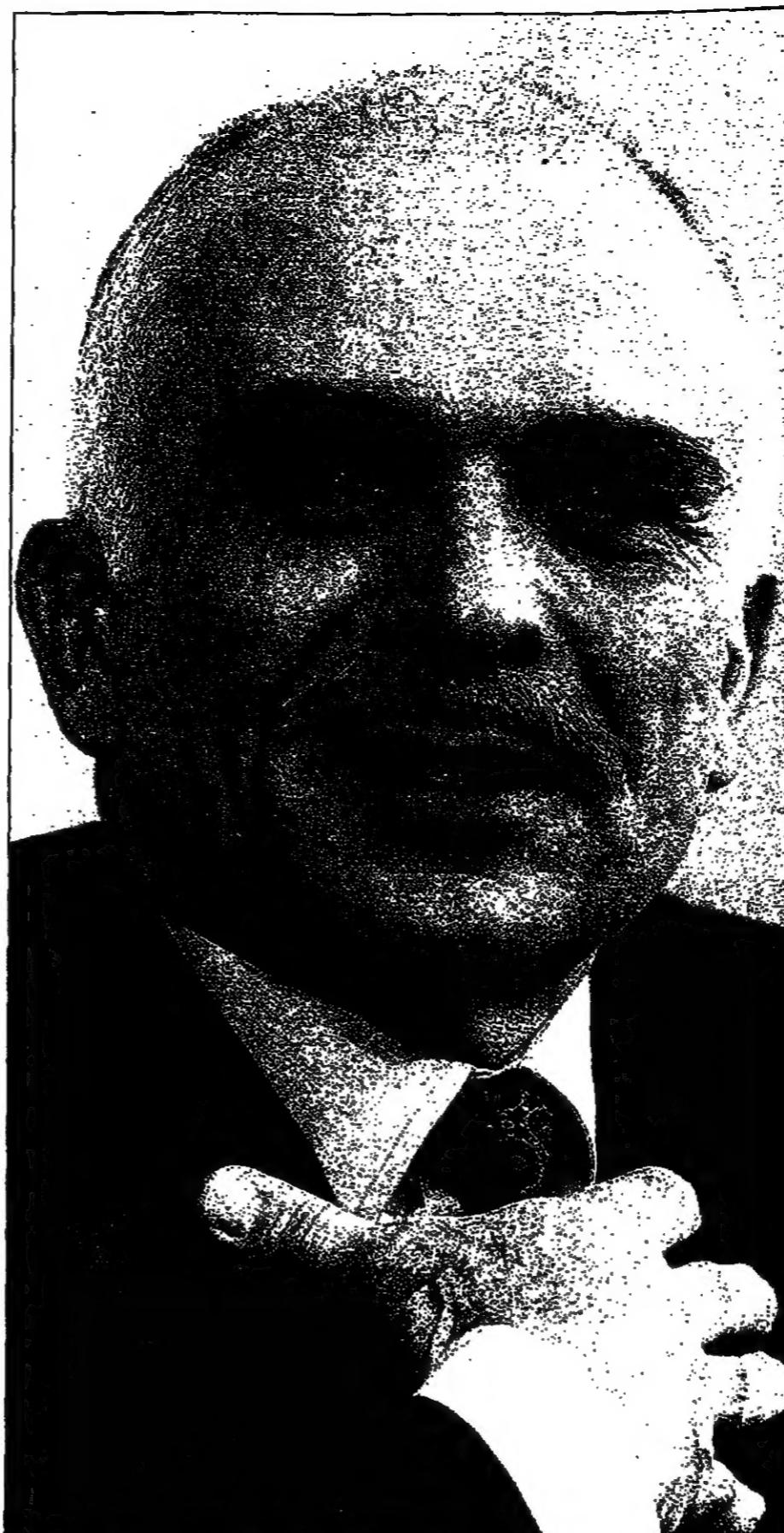
Fayez Tarawneh, a Jordanian member of the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation to the talks, predicted that, with the advent of the Labour-led government in Israel, it might now be possible to negotiate the transfer of power from Israeli occupation to autonomy for the 1.8 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Jordan, sensitive to Palestine, fears that it intends to reimpose its rule over the West Bank, is adamant that it is merely interested in helping to facilitate the transitional period.

King Husain will face two of his greatest adversaries, Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli leader and the man who commanded Israeli forces when they captured the West Bank, then under Jordanian control, and Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader who has been an adversary of the king since 1970.

King Husain has rightly calculated that the peace dividend for Jordan, in terms of political stability and economic prosperity, would be enormous. But he must also appreciate that if the initiative fails, either through resistance by one or more parties or a change of administration in Washington, the view from the royal palace may not look so attractive.

Leading article, page 11



Monarch with a mission: King Husain, in taking a leading role in the Middle East peace process, faces one of his biggest challenges as Jordan's leader

Deng's reforms suffer as police batons punish rioting investors

FROM REUTER IN SHENZHEN

POLICE beat and herded would-be stock investors in the southern city of Shenzhen yesterday after riots which hit at the heart of China's economic reform drive.

Local authorities desperate to restore order after a night of violence, continued issuing 500,000 share tickets late into the night to calm thousands of angry investors who missed their chance in a disorderly sale of stock application forms at the weekend.

Dr Kaunda, who was in the town to campaign for his eldest son, Panji, in a parliamentary by-election, was arrested with his former prime minister, Kofi Annan, as they addressed residents in the remote area bordering on Mozambique, The Times of Zambia reported. They were released some hours later.

Local authorities desperate to restore order after a night of violence, continued issuing 500,000 share tickets late into the night to calm thousands of angry investors who missed their chance in a disorderly sale of stock application forms at the weekend.

On the Shanghai market, reopened in 1990 after being closed for more than 40 years by the Communists, prices of shares recovered for Chinese citizens crashed more than 11 per cent in Shenzhen, the authorities halted trading at midday after a similar freefall. Outside dozens of banks throughout Shenzhen, police men forced those hoping to

buy tickets to squat in groups of about 300 in blazing summer heat, witnesses said.

By 11 pm many banks had closed, but thousands of frustrated, weary people still stood in queues snaking some 300 yards from two banks in the city centre. Many stood in pools of sewage, and thou-

sands of crushed plastic water bottles, the fifth created over four days by the one million would-be shareholders who invaded the city last Saturday.

Dozens of shoes, lost by their owners at the height of the confusion, added to the squalor. Riot police swinging wooden clubs charged the

crowds several times to chase off hordes of sightseers, while other police dragged suspected queue-jumpers out of the crowd, beating them mercilessly. One policeman repeatedly fired a stun gun, sending purple flashes into the night and scattering terrified investors and onlookers.

Shenzhen, an industrial city which has grown out of paddies in little more than a decade, has become a key test of the economic reforms of Mr Deng. Analysts in Peking said the riot could not have come in a worse place or at a worse time for Mr Deng. He used Shenzhen early this year to launch his latest national reform drive and the violence could give powerful ammunition to hardliners who fear the move away from communist doctrine. A boom on China's stock markets has lured vast numbers of ordinary people wanting to get rich fast to the share issue. In such an atmosphere of hysteria, the stock application forms have become a prized commodity.

The statement will be debated and refined by leaders of 104 countries meeting here from September 1. "It is a draft which expresses the broad concerns of the movement and in some parts goes beyond our expectations," a Latin American envoy said.

Indonesia proposes in the statement, drawn up after

consultations with other members, that the non-aligned countries support human rights values. But it says these

must be considered in the context of a country's social, economic and cultural traditions.

The draft says protectionism and inward-looking

trading blocs threaten free world trade. (Reuters)

Neutrals warn West on rights

Jakarta: The non-aligned movement, in a joint statement prepared by Indonesia for next month's summit, is warning the West against using human rights and environmental concerns to interfere in the affairs of developing countries.

The statement will be debated and refined by leaders of 104 countries meeting here from September 1. "It is a draft which expresses the broad concerns of the movement and in some parts goes beyond our expectations," a Latin American envoy said. Indonesia proposes in the statement, drawn up after consultations with other members, that the non-aligned countries support human rights values. But it says these must be considered in the context of a country's social, economic and cultural traditions. The draft says protectionism and inward-looking trading blocs threaten free world trade. (Reuters)

Belt tightened

Quito: Sixto Durán Ballén, a conservative, assumed the presidency of Ecuador with a warning that the people would have to accept more sacrifices from planned free market reforms designed to bolster the economy of the oil-exporting country. Señor Durán Ballén, who lost two previous presidential attempts, pledged an end to state intervention in the economy and welcomed foreign investment. (Reuters)

Law delayed

Jakarta: President Suharto of Indonesia issued a government regulation which postponed by one year the implementation of a tough traffic law which had been the target of mounting popular protests. (AFP)

Volcano erupts

Manila: The Mount Pinatubo volcano in north Philippines has begun its second eruption in 14 months, scientists said. The government has put on alert rescue units ready to evacuate 70,000 people in imminent danger.

Japan's beauty spot turned into hamburger city

FROM JOANNA PITMAN IN WAKKANAI, JAPAN

FROM the way people go on about it in Tokyo, you would expect Wakkani, Japan's equivalent of John O'Groats to be a ruggedly beautiful wilderness inhabited only by a few foxes, wild deer and the odd hardy farmer wandering about chewing tirelessly on an ear of corn. But bucolic bliss it most certainly is not.

Cupboard-sized beauty parlours are sandwiched between pinball centres and Happy Eater hamburger drive-ins. There is a toy emporium called Bon Bon that sells seven varieties of inflatable baboon, there are "business hotels" called Tweety Pie and America House, and some magnate from our town has plonked a cement works right on the harbour front, a corner of town which in days gone by, might charitably have been described as picturesque.

But the people of Wakkani are a happy and proud lot, since geography has bestowed many honours upon their town. Here at latitude 45 degrees north, level with Milan, the Crimea, and Montreal, Wakkani is the farthest north you can get in Japanese eyes and still count yourself civilised. Wakkani boasts the longest day in summer and the shortest in winter. It is the proud home of Japan's second-tallest lighthouse, its fourth-longest "scenic driving course", its ninth most beautiful coastline, and its twelfth "nicest" climate, by whose reckoning it is not.

Wakkani landscape garden which, according to the guide book, is noted for its tranquillity and its careful blending of traditional architecture with nature's own ponds, trees, streams and stones.

You can experience a little of the garden's peace by looking at the photographs. Unruffled ponds mirror gently bending pine trees and banks of azaleas. Butterflies settle on centuries-old hollyhocks, and the soft wooden boards of the tea-house verandahs look as if they have hosted many contemplative would-be poets.

The park seems to have all the attributes for a place on a Scenic Japan Calendar, but the photographs must have been taken very early in the morning. Yesterday an awful lot of people had turned up on the first leg of their three-day "O-Bon" summer break, to soak up the peace and quiet. And then there is the

"This is the pond of a thousand years, and this ancient stone lantern was made 100 years ago. You can see how ancient it is, and you can buy plastic replicas in the souvenir shop by the bus stop. Madam, I would respectfully ask you to restrain your son who has just stuck bubble gum on the temple gate ... Kindly keep moving as we are completely blocking the path now, and the bus leaves in two-and-a-half minutes."

© Peking: A Soviet helicopter carrying Japanese tourists crashed near the Great Wall yesterday, killing at least 16 people, a Japanese embassy official said. The helicopter was carrying 17 Japanese tourists, a Japanese tour agent and six Chinese, including the crew and a guide. Fifteen people died at the crash site and one died later of injuries.

De Klerk draws black radical group into fresh round of talks

FROM MICHAEL HAMILIN IN JOHANNESBURG

IN A significant pointer to the likely resumption of constitutional talks between the white government of South Africa and the ANC, the ANC's black radical rival, the Pan Africanist Congress, last night went into meeting with ministers of President de Klerk's government.

It was not the first time the two sides have met — they had a meeting last April in Nigeria after the congress's refusal to join the earlier forum for constitutional talks, the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa). Nothing seemed to come out of that meeting, and the congress maintained its insistence that the only forum for talks would have to be outside South Africa and under a neutral chairman.

The indications are that the apparent collapse of Codesa, and the urging of Cyrus Vance, the UN special representative here, have apparently led to a softening of the congress line.

Dikgang Moseneke, the deputy president of the congress, said before last night's talks that they would discuss a new negotiating forum, but that the only item on the forum's agenda should be the demand for an elected constituent assembly.

Since the government has long said it accepts the idea of such an assembly, there would appear to be little difficulty about this demand, though the government would obviously prefer to have a more ornate conference than the congress has in mind.

The apparent readiness of the PAC to enter into talks indicates that the main black organisation, the African National Congress, cannot be far behind. The PAC would be unwilling to be outflanked by an organisation it considers to be ready to sell out the black interest.

If the PAC is willing to talk about entry into negotiations,

how much more willing will Mandela be," Professor Tom Lodge, the Witwatersrand University expert on black political movements, noted.

The PAC itself was once a breakaway from the mainstream of the ANC. In 1958 the ANC was riven by disputes between the Africanists and the leftists. The Africanists believed that the black movement should not be so much in the hands of white Communists, and Robert Sobukwe eventually led his followers in a dramatic walkout from a Transvaal meeting in November of that year.

In March of the following year the PAC was founded, with Sobukwe as its leader, and a good deal of rivalry for the support of the black community ensued.

After the ANC announced a pass-book protest for March 31 of the following year, the PAC undercut by announcing its own protest for ten days earlier. In the course of the March 21 protest, 69 people were killed and 180 injured by panicking policemen at Sharpeville. By March 28 the government had prepared legislation banning both the ANC and the PAC and at the beginning of April the leadership of both went either to prison or abroad.

Sobukwe spent nine years in jail and died while under a banning order in Kimberley in February 1978. The PAC continued without him and began the process of tearing itself to pieces. In Dar es Salaam this process led to an actual shooting war breaking out among PAC factions.

The organisation from then on lacked both the charismatic leadership of the ANC, and anything of its organisational abilities. Its Pogo guerrilla movement was much less effective than the ANC's, and the Black Consciousness Movement of Steve Biko, which might have

been its natural ally, was allowed to grow, pass and die without its influence.

Today, two years after its unbanning by President de Klerk, the PAC is still a force to be reckoned with, at least on a platform or in the media. Whether it has a mass following on the ground has not been adequately tested.

Certainly many of the more vociferous demonstrators at mass meetings tend to wear PAC T-shirts. The thugs who beat up journalists at the Boipatong funeral in June chanted PAC slogans.

Today the main strength of the PAC is that it is ready as a radical alternative to the ANC, if the latter's radicals consider it to have sold out to the white regime. "The non-racialism of the ANC is not to everyone's taste," Professor Lodge says. "It has provided a useful home for African intellectuals who are sidelined by the conspicuous role that the whites play in the ANC councils."



Battle dress: two members of the Huancayo self-defence militia, formed to combat Peru's Shining Path guerrillas, preparing for a parade in Lima

Maori rights award alarms fishermen

FROM REUTER IN WELLINGTON

COMMERCIAL fishermen have been shocked and angered by a recommendation yesterday that a New Zealand Maori tribe be awarded virtually all fishing rights off the country's South Island.

The tribe due to benefit from the recommendation is the Ngai Tahu. The tribunal said the 1840 treaty of Waitangi drawn up between the British crown and Maoris had not been respected. The treaty is a controversial document that has been interpreted as ceding vast tracts to Maori tribes. It was drawn up by Britain to guarantee Maori rights in exchange for Britain gaining sovereignty. Most interpretations say that fishing grounds were ceded to the Maoris in the treaty. These were never recognised or honoured as commercial fishing developed.

Tipene O'Regan, Ngai Tahu trust board chairman, said negotiations would involve compromise and the tribe did not expect to get everything listed in the tribunal's report. "I think a blind man could see that it is not possible to restore to Ngai Tahu 100 per cent of what it has been dispossessed."

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SIMLA NOTEBOOK by Christopher Thomas

Time stands still in Raj hill resort

A mudslide smashed through the wall of Simla's Masonic lodge a few days ago, coming in a half knee-deep in the main hall. The queen of hill stations never did get its drainage right, and hillsides cascade into the town every monsoon.

The fin-roofed lodge was a social hub for seven months of the year when the Raj transported itself to Simla (nowadays Indianised to Shimla) for the summer. E.O. Wilsey, founder and first Masonic master in 1915, looks down imperiously on his dying creation from above the fireplace.

The lodge is tucked behind Christ Church, a Gothic structure, now a shabby yellow and with many smashed windows. But a fresco around the chancel window designed by Rudyard Kipling's father, Lockwood, has survived the abuse. He was principal of the Mayo school of art in Lahore.

Two of the three clocks on the tower stopped at half past eight years ago, and the other one staggered on to half past ten before turning to rust.

The Roman Catholic church down the hill is not much better off, but Father Thomas manages to muster enough Anglo-Indians for Sunday Mass.

Much of old Simla is neglected and crumbling, but even when it was new it was a shambles. Sir Edwin Lutyens, the creator of New Delhi, said it must have been designed by very clever monkeys who should be shot in case they did it again.

Rothney Castle, home of Sir Allan Octavian Hume, the eccentric Scotsman who founded the Indian National Congress, has been



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Ulster and the lies of silence

Peter Millar on the strange decision to ban the UDA but not Sinn Fein

The man on the radio with the thick mid-Ulster accent made his point firmly: "We will still be here." He was speaking of the UDA, the Ulster Defence Association, now banned for failing sufficiently to disguise its links with the killing and extortion that are the stuff of everyday life in parts of Northern Ireland.

But the man on the radio was not a member of the UDA. He was an actor, though the tone, accent and the determination in his gravel voice made him probably more convincing than the real thing. The UDA ban has not altered the law on broadcasting its statements; the voices — if not the words — of Ulster's extremists were silenced by the Home Office in October 1988 when it banned the use of "actuality" involving members of illegal organisations, plus Sinn Fein and the UDA.

This has long been a preposterous situation: a real advance would have been a version of Norman Tebbit's "cricket test" to identify the open supporters of violence. They could then be jailed if they were proved to be advocates of murder. As it is, the broadcast media are actors to parrot the evil words of the supporters of sectarian violence. Does the Home Office think that this will somehow neutralise the message?

The question plaguing the Protestant community in Northern Ireland today is that if the spokesmen for Sinn Fein and the UDA were both deemed to be paramilitary mouthpieces — effectively equated in the broadcasting ban — why is one now declared illegal while the other continues to propagate its message publicly? The official line, being leaked — even more anonymously than through actors — by the mouthpieces of Downing Street and Stormont, is that Sinn Fein is "not actively involved in paramilitary activity", while the UDA is little more than the already outlawed "Ulster Freedom Fighters" by another name.

This differential is, of course, utter hogwash. It merely congratulates the IRA for playing its murderous game by Queensberry Rules. When a member of a paramilitary force wants to "retire" from active service — providing he is not already on a wanted list — he can move across the invisible divide into the confy offices of Sinn Fein and stand for the local council or Parliament. Similarly, a young Sinn Fein activist may disappear overnight from the political scene to get "blooded" at the front line. The separation is no more real than that between many of Robert Maxwell's businesses: it is largely a matter of clever book-keeping.

The UDA was not that clever. Partly because it did not think it had to be. Despite the Anglo-Irish pact, only now is the dull dread certainty dawning on the Shankhill Road that a British government might well "sell Ulster down the river", given half a legal

By appearing to abandon an even-hand Whitehall could be creating a new balance of terror in Ireland

and moral chance. The hard men of East Belfast, and many of their more moderate supporters, will see the ban on the UDA as not only an absence of even-handedness, but also tacit acknowledgement by Whitehall that one day it may end up talking to Sinn Fein. After all "Armalite in one hand and ballot box in the other" was openly acknowledged IRA strategy. For the British government to nod smilingly understanding when Sinn Fein declares one hand did not know what the other was doing will seem treacherous hypocrisy, in the bars of the Newtownards Road and Sandy Row. The UDA has hinted broadly that it will now re-emerge in another form. In fact various formats have long existed in embryo in the form of "loyalist prisoners' aid associations". Ask any black taxi driver at the foot of the Shankhill Road to take you to "the Eagle" and you will be automatically deposited outside the Shankhill Road Heritage Centre, a Protestant souvenir shop above which, between walls decorated with Battle of the Somme commemoration postcards and views of the Shankhill when it was "the heart of the empire", are the offices of the Loyalist Prisoners' Welfare Association. Here, a reporter might find someone who would know "how to put you in touch" with the illegal Ulster Volunteer Force, the UFF's "friendly rival".

For a long time, there was a pernicious belief among the Protestant community that it and the British government were essentially on the same side: that both wanted Northern Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom. That was something taken in with mother's milk: it was why the annual parade of the veterans of the Somme was a hallowed loyalist occasion; it reinforced the anavistic ties of the Protestant community to Queen and Country with an old-fashioned patriotism that only the most dyed-in-the-wool British Tories would not find embarrassing.

The assumption was that violence blew things apart and as such was primarily a tool of the IRA which wanted to sunder the union. The loyalist vote went to politicians dedicated to preserving or restoring the status quo. Protestant violence began as a reaction but got out of control. It is fuelled today chiefly by vengeful frustration at the security forces' inability to defeat the IRA. Making the UDA illegal will not alter that; it may force it to play by Sinn Fein rules with the formation of a political party with some equally symbolic name (the Red Hand?) which will campaign for election on a real hard line, reject compromise and condone — afterwards — the bloody deeds of a revitalised gang of freedom fighters.

By appearing to abandon an even hand, the government may actually help to create a new symmetry in Northern Ireland: a new balance of terror.

One reason for AFDC's unpopularity is that it is heavily concerned

...and moreover

MATTHEW PARRIS

In the first week of August, a swarm of bees came to stay with me in Derbyshire. It was too late for them to make much honey. The tedious English proverb says:

A swarm of bees in May Is worth a load of hay. A swarm of bees in June Is worth a silver spoon. A swarm of bees in July Is not worth a fly.

But I was honoured that the swarm should have chosen my door above which to hang, though to enter my office you had to duck. A dark night, a moment of absent-mindedness, it didn't bear thinking about. Still, I thought, the bees, like new age travellers, would soon move on.

The days passed. The swarm grew. Worker bees returned with full pollen sacs. They were making honeycombs. Plainly there had been a misunderstanding. Overnight hospitality is one thing; permanent house-guests, another. Yet dispersing them now, with autumn approaching, would be heartless. And besides, this was the week of my birthday. To kill or scatter them could anger the gods.

Superstition? Perhaps. On Monday night it was reinforced. I was with my friend Marlen in Dorset. Among her guests at dinner was a distinguished Oxford mathematician. I told him about my bees. A look of pain crossed his face. "Would you like a hive?" he asked, a little sadly.

Next morning, Marlen and I drove to his home, a mill in the

countryside near Yeovil. In the middle of his large kitchen was the mill itself — shafts, gears, a wooden shute and the great millstones all in working order. His family can make enough flour for a year in about five minutes. But they must leave Dorset and sell the old millhouse. "House-hunters enquire whether they'd need planning permission to rip this lot out," he said, a little sadly.

And the hive? "I bought the equipment, and a swarm, and was just starting bee-keeping when I ran into my hive with a lawnmower," sustaining 19 stings. His enthusiasm for bees has passed," he said, a little sadly. "Take the hive and my kit, too. And my bee-keeping book."

As we left, the mathematician's son was practising archery by the millstream. We waved goodbye, his hive in our boot, passing the "For Sale" sign in the road and feeling implicated in the smashing up of medieval tableau. I shall look after my hive. If you would like to cherish a small mill in rural Dorset, or can offer employment to an archer, please let me know...

But I digress. The hiveless bees are in Derbyshire. The beeless hive is with Marlen and me, in Dorset. How to get from A to Bee?

We now pass lightly over a complex picture involving Marlen's Volvo, a number of London railway termini and a top criminal barrister friend with his BMW — and move straight to my arrival in Derbyshire by

Seizing control of the camps is a feasible if high risk mission for the West, says Michael Armitage

With the United States, Britain and France agreed on a draft United Nations resolution calling for the use of force, if necessary, to deliver humanitarian aid to Bosnia, it is urgent to consider exactly how outside military forces might be employed.

The idea has been mooted of swamping the whole of the disputed areas with UN forces. How many troops might be needed to do this is anyone's guess. Lawrence Freedman, professor of war studies at King's College London, has suggested a figure of 100,000; it would almost certainly be at least double that, even without counting the logistic support. Quite apart from the questions of where all these troops would come from and who would pay the huge costs involved, it is the matter of what they would do once they arrived. There is no front to be formed, no line to be held, no buffer zone to patrol. And since the opposing sides refuse even to discuss a political settlement, and since they consistently renege whenever a ceasefire seems to be in

prospect, how long would the UN force be expected to remain on the ground, and what would happen when it finally pulled out?

Air strikes on military targets in Serbia have been suggested as another option. But which military targets? This is not like the Gulf war, in which massive formations of armoured could be bombarded from the air; nor is it a conflict in which disrupted enemy command and control networks might be expected to cripple an army. The troops of the former Yugoslav army have been trained to hinder the advance of any invading army for as long as possible, and then to head for the hills from where they would expect to conduct small-scale but deadly guerrilla assaults. Thus if air strikes are to be made against Serbia, they must be calculated to produce high political rather than purely military impact. What if the

Serbs simply ignored the air strikes? The West could hardly try to increase the pressure by launching a full-scale air campaign, because of the ever-present risk of civilian deaths and casualties.

A more cautious, but still risky, move would be greater to increase the effort being put into the relief convoys, and to bring in the extra military force needed to escort them. Yet if these increased relief efforts were to make a real difference to the balance of power in the beleaguered areas, then the Serbs might well try to halt the convoys altogether. Any effective military hindrance to the convoys would then make it necessary to deploy troops all along the routes, for example along the 160 miles or more between the port of Split and the Bosnian capital Sarajevo. But even that would not be enough. The commanding ground along the routes would also have to be

secured: we would need troops to protect troops.

Finally, there is the possibility both of taking over the recently-discovered prison camps and of forming sanctuary areas for refugees as was done for the Kurds in northern Iraq. With or without the agreement of the Serbs, UN troops could be landed by helicopter or even by parachute to disarm the guards at these camps and take over their administration. It would not be cheap, it would not be easy and there could well be casualties. But at least something positive would have been done, and would have been seen to have been done, without undue military commitment and without crossing that dangerously thin line between relief effort and war effort.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Armitage is a former Commandant of the Royal College of Defence Studies, London.

Strategy for Bosnia

Seizing control of the camps is a feasible if high risk mission for the West, says Michael Armitage

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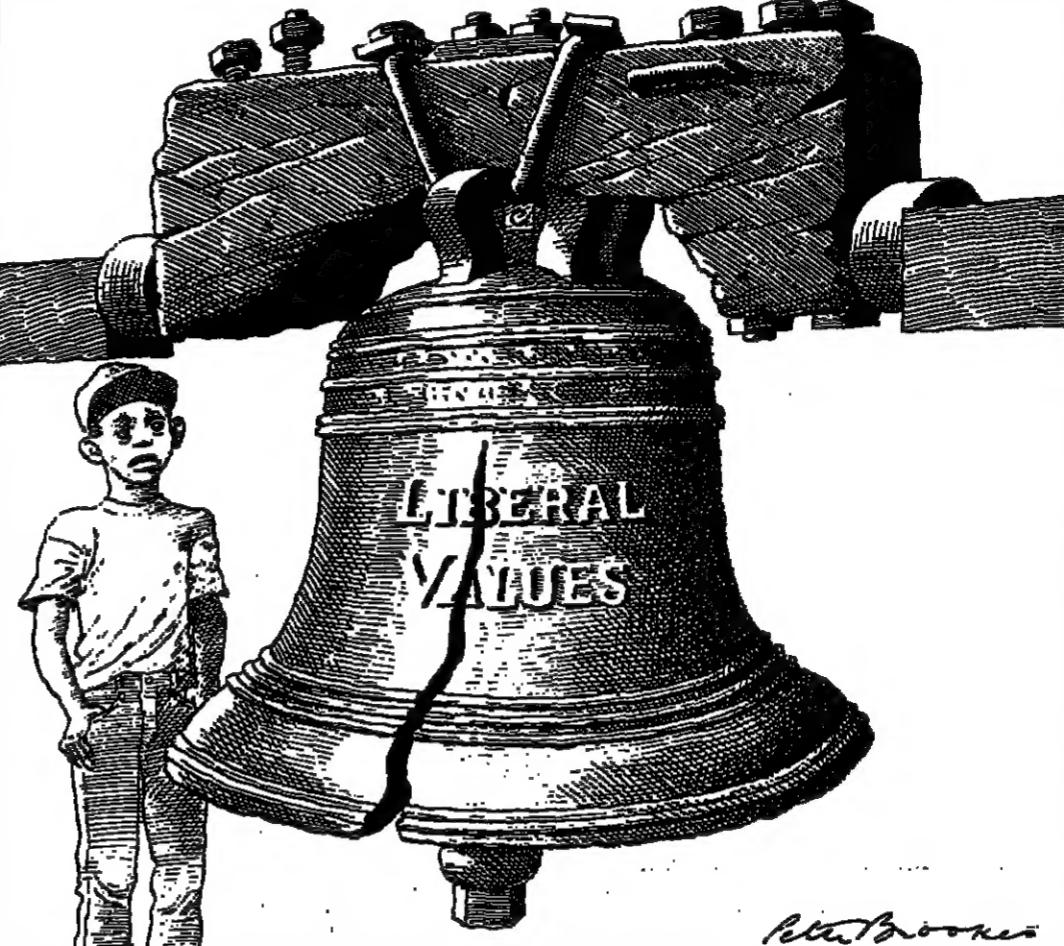
persuaded, most solutions would fall foul of well organised interest groups. Many people stay on welfare because they get their medical bills paid; and many small employers are reluctant to expand their businesses because they cannot afford to offer medical insurance to new workers. Everyone knows the answer is a national health service modelled on the German or Canadian systems. Everyone also knows that every proposal will be fought tooth and nail by many doctors, hospitals and insurance companies.

To push welfare mothers off the dole and into work, the government will have to set up or pay for adequate day care; and create a public works programme for those who cannot find other work. This will cost far more than the present system; it will alsoadden the unions that organise low paid local government workers, who will rightly feel that their wages will be kept down by this new addition to the workforce. Since many city workforces are already in form of covert assistance to black and migrant workers who might otherwise find it hard to get a job, this will be a particularly nasty fight.

The most urgent candidate for tough love is the American electorate itself. Ross Perot withdrew his economic proposals only after he had stopped running for the presidency. He saw that the electorate is still in no mood to hear the truth about the effects of deficit spending, failure to invest in the infrastructure, and failure to attend to the country's human capital. Governor Clinton meanwhile has the air of a man with a parcel containing something nasty who hopes he need not unwrap it — his call for sacrifice, for greater national savings, and greater public investment has been wrapped up in quotations from John F. Kennedy's famous "ask not what your country can do for you..." speech. President Bush is still in the way addiction clinics would diagnose as denial. You will know that tough love has really come to American politics when Mr Bush and Mr Clinton start competing over how high they will raise the gasoline tax — but don't wait around for it to happen.

The author is professor of politics at Princeton University.

Even Democrats despair of the poor, argues Alan Ryan



trated on black recipients. This is a delicate topic, and one where statistics are hotly contested; but nobody doubts that 90 per cent of the babies born to black teenagers are born out of wedlock, nor that 80 per cent of black children live on welfare for some period before they reach the age of 18. White illegitimacy has also been rising, but from a much lower base, and is not associated with the horrors of the inner city such as drug dealing and violence. Black spokesmen increasingly complain that the white population wishes the black population would just go away, and this seems to be true — but it is not compassion fatigue, just intellectual exhaustion. Nobody knows how to get drug dealers out of the ghetto, how to stop teenage girls having babies they cannot

care for, how to get students to stay in school long enough to get an education, and how to steer them into decent jobs. There has not just been "white flight" as middle-class city dwellers have moved out to the suburbs to escape the crumbling cities, there has been middle-class black flight as well. This makes it harder for welfare services to find their clients or to recruit community organisers who provide grassroots support to go with government assistance. The picture is not uniformly bleak, and there are hundreds of gallant programmes and small successes. But there is no steady progress in breaking the cycle of underclass poverty.

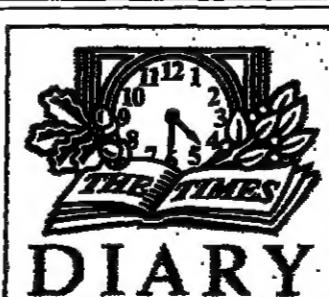
But sensible solutions need a lot of public money up front, and a lot of careful administration; but the electorate thinks that politicians are chronically corrupt and spendthrift and so will not pay for them. Even if the public could be

persuaded, most solutions would fall foul of well organised interest groups. Many people stay on welfare because they get their medical bills paid; and many small employers are reluctant to expand their businesses because they cannot afford to offer medical insurance to new workers. Everyone knows the answer is a national health service modelled on the German or Canadian systems. Everyone also knows that every proposal will be fought tooth and nail by many doctors, hospitals and insurance companies.

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9am. The birds will be carried into the meat and poultry department to the strains of the *Lament of the Lost Grouse* played by four pipers

...

Border dispute

THE elevation of Nicholas Ridley to the Upper House has caused certain consternation among his more geographically minded and politically correct peers. Ridley, who now styles himself Baron Ridley of Liddesdale, gives his address as Northumberland, England. Liddesdale, of course, is in the Scottish Borders.

Frances, Lady Elliott of Newcastle-on-Tyne, in the Borders, says: "This strikes some inhab-

I think it's a
reived
Ridley

9am. The birds will be carried into the meat and poultry department to the strains of the *Lament of the Lost Grouse* played by four pipers

...

Glorious 19th

EXPENSIVE traditions are falling faster than Bosnian frontiers in recession-hit Britain. The race among hoteliers to get the first grouse of the season on the menu has fallen by the wayside. At Gleneagles, just a silver will be served for the curious with this morning's breakfast. Neil Woodcock, marketing director, says: "We prefer to serve it a week later when, like all game, it has been hung and properly treated. I am looking forward to the Glorious Nineteenth." The Ritz is following suit. The Savoy, however, will have several brace driven down in time for dinner tonight and Harrods is pulling out all the stops.

At least 12 brace are being flown down from Mohamed Al-Fayed's 40,000-acre estate near Invergordon and will arrive at the store shortly before it opens at

9am. The birds will be carried into the meat and poultry department to the strains of the *Lament of the Lost Grouse* played by four pipers

...

It's a small world

JANI Allan it is not, but a new libel trial is about to grab the headlines. Professor David Lodge, head of English at Birmingham University and a best-selling author, is the subject of a libel action brought jointly by Mills & Boon and one of its authors, Pauline Harris. The brouhaha began in February when Lodge wrote an article in a Sunday newspaper accusing Harris of plagiarism. He alleged similarities between his novel *Nice Work*, shortlisted for the Booker Prize, and Harris's *The Iron Master*, published by Mills & Boon last year.

Lodge has now received writs from both Mills & Boon and Harris of Hereford, Worcester, who says she has not been able to write a word since the article appeared. Her husband, Anthony, says: "My wife is shattered by this. She has been forced to resort to law to clear her name." The matter is made even more embarrassing as the couple are both English graduates of Birmingham University.

There will be little surprise if the academic being sued is a top novelist.

next Lodge novel concerns a top romantic novelist.



DO AS THE ROMANS DO

In normal times a middle-ranking building society's decision to raise its mortgage rate after some managerial problems left behind by the death of its flamboyant chief executive would be a cause for local regret, but hardly for national comment. But times are hardly normal for Britain's long-suffering homeowners and for the millions of businesses that depend on their prosperity and financial confidence. Thus yesterday's announcement that Skipton Building Society would increase its mortgage rate by half a percentage point was, at the least, a warning for the Treasury. At worst, it could turn into a serious blow to the economy and with it, John Major's hopes of pulling through the recession with his political and financial credibility intact.

The economic anguishes at present suggest that Skipton's move will remain just a minor local difficulty. But it is a reminder that a potentially devastating increase in interest rates across the whole economy is a possibility that cannot be ignored.

Norman Lamont, even if he were not on holiday, would presumably enter his usual plea of ERM-induced paralysis in the face of the threat of higher mortgage rates. But these claims of impotence should no longer be accepted, either by public opinion or by the Chancellor's cabinet colleagues. Even within the ERM, there is much the government could do to stimulate the economy. And while the best form of action would be through public investment, as *The Times* argued on Monday, a market-oriented programme to hold down the cost of money to homeowners, small businesses and retail borrowers should also be part of the Treasury's anti-recession plans.

ERM membership is only one influence on the level of British interest rates. Its impact on the rates paid by building societies and banks to retail depositors, and charged to homeowners and small businesses, is only indirect. This point has been illustrated in the past month, as the government has twice cut the interest rates paid on National Savings to let the building societies collect more funds without having to raise their mortgage

rates. The cutbacks in National Savings came too late for the Skipton's borrowers, but for the bigger and more prosperous building societies, the pressure to raise interest rates was removed, at least for the time being, by a stroke of the Chancellor's pen.

The Treasury must stand ready to take further action if necessary to keep retail savings rates down. National Savings rates should be reduced further, to the point where the government ceases to be a serious competitor in the market for personal savings, and perhaps even becomes a net supplier of funds as money is withdrawn from National Savings accounts.

The government would then have to borrow more money from the wholesale money markets, but it should do this by selling Treasury bills to large institutional investors instead of hogging retail deposits. Since Britain's money market rates are determined by the German Bundesbank, rather than by the need to control the British money supply, the government could issue Treasury bills to its heart's content, without putting any further upward pressure on British interest rates.

This policy would not, on its own, win a standing ovation at the Conservative party conference. Yet, as part of a coherent package of anti-recession measures, it would illustrate a vital political point. The government is not powerless in the face of the worst recession for two generations. Even within the ERM, there are alternatives to the present paralysis. However, the policies required to live within the ERM may mean an increase in government interference with the workings of free markets.

This is hardly surprising, since ERM membership is in itself the greatest possible market distortion, inviting further distortions to overcome its damaging effects. That, of course, is one of the best reasons for pulling out of the ERM. But if Mr Major is not prepared to leave the system, he may have to defend Britain's economy with continental-style fine-tuning. If Mr Major insists on monetary subservience to Europe, he will have to do as the Europeans do.

CALIBAN'S ISLAND

While the world's attention has been focused on the horrors of Yugoslavia, negotiations have quietly been going on at the United Nations this summer to resolve another bitter ethnic dispute—Cyprus.

In over two months of talks, Boutros Ghali, the UN secretary-general, has succeeded in bringing the leaders of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities to within sight of agreement, on the two key issues that have condemned the divided island to stalemate for 18 years: the amount of territory controlled by each side, and the return of refugees forced out of their homes by the last round of fighting in 1974. The prospect of agreement is tantalisingly close. But what is lacking is political will on the Turkish Cypriot side.

Over the years the Greek Cypriots have been pushed into accepting that Cyprus cannot return to a unitary state, but must become a federation of two separate regions: the Turks in the north and the Greeks in the south. But they insist, and the Turkish Cypriots concede, that the green line, marking the limit of the Turkish army advance, gives the Turks 20 per cent more land than is merited by their population. In years of frustrating negotiations the UN has therefore concentrated on a different map.

Rauf Denktaş, a wily lawyer who is president of the self-styled Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, unrecognised by all except Turkey, has for years been playing for time. He has no real interest in a settlement that would effectively mean the end of his breakaway republic. But the rest of the world has lost patience with this dispute, which has consumed a vast amount of UN time, including that of the busy secretary-general, cost millions of pounds in UN peacekeeping forces, and poisoned the relations between two NATO allies. And last weekend, after he and George Vassiliou, the Greek Cypriot president, had spent three weeks in daily

indirect negotiations, the question was put to him: would he, or would he not, accept the map as the basis for the next stage face-to-face talks on the wider constitutional issues?

Mr Denktaş fudged. He conceded the other main point generously—the return of the refugees. In practice this is more likely to mean the mutual paying of compensation, as there is too little confidence for either displaced Greeks or Turks to return as minorities to their old homes. But he balks at details of the UN map.

However, he is loath to leave New York, sabotaging the negotiations and attracting the strong censure of the permanent five on the security council, who have been receiving daily briefings on the interminable talks and have plenty else to do. He therefore says he has agreed the territorial issue and will continue talking this week.

He is in a weak position. Turkey, his main protector, has bigger fish to fry. Cyprus is an irritant in relations with the West, especially the European Community. It is still an inflammatory issue for Turkish public opinion.

The pressure must now be brutal, and Ankara must be mobilised in the effort. President Vassiliou faces elections next year, and already his critics say the Turks cannot be trusted; a breakdown in New York would seem to prove them right. The Greek Cypriot side has moved a long way from its earlier intransigence. A return to entrenched positions would be tragic.

Cyprus has become a classic example of a stubborn problem allowed to fester simply because the island is so small and no one is being killed. President Bush called last year for new initiatives. The world wants this squalid quarrel off its back. Neither Mr Denktaş nor Mr Vassiliou should be allowed to leave New York until they have shaken hands, face to face, over an agreement to live together in peace.

ONCE AND FUTURE KING

The Harrow schoolboy who ascended the Hashemite throne after the assassination of his grandfather and abdication of his father has now been King of Jordan for 40 years. Hussein bin Talal is, after Kim Il Sung of North Korea, the world's longest-serving ruler. Others have been king for longer, no one, not even a dictator, has matched his experience of directing his nation's affairs. Jordan today is celebrating a reign that has survived numerous assassination attempts, the machinations of hostile neighbours, two wars and a civil war, a catastrophic economic blockade, dynastic turmoil and countless schemes to merge, abolish or unify his kingdom with other more transient Arab regimes. Unlike others who have held power so long, his rule has been, almost without qualification, a force for stability and peace in a dangerous area. Without him, Jordan would long since have ceased to exist.

The boy king, the handsome, courteous Sandhurst graduate who captured the hearts of British television audiences and impressed the world with his simple, earnest patriotism and Arab dignity, is now 57 and looks older than his years. If there is a touch of weariness about him, it is understandable. He has lived a fast and precarious life. He has been married four times, and suffered divorce and bereavement. He has seen his relatives, advisers and friends gunned down, been betrayed by those he trusted, lost half his kingdom in battle and been rebuffed time and time again in his fruitless search for a Middle East settlement.

To the burden of public office he has added the toll of an exhausting private life.

fast cars, a pilot's love of daring, a racy enjoyment of luxury. Never has he been able to relax, never to trust the word or loyalty of those around him except in rare moments among the Beduin. This perpetual vigilance has prevented him slipping into the sultanic existence of the former Shah; it has given him an acute sense of how the political winds are blowing. To survive, he has had to learn the cunning of a desert fox. He has at different times had to jettison cherished ideas, alliances, advisers. No autobiography was more aptly named than his *Uneasy Lies the Head*.

This pragmatism has its critics. Many would say he is loyal only to one principle: the survival of the Hashemite dynasty. Despite a commitment to his country's prosperity, he has enriched himself mightily and enjoys a lifestyle far removed from that of his subjects. His experiments with democracy have been halting, his tolerance of dissent extremely low. His willingness to bend his principles almost reached a point of humiliation during the Gulf war, though historical hindsight may show he had little choice.

Any monarch, or indeed elected president, less wily would not have survived. What makes King Hussein an admirable figure is his courage, his magnanimity and his enduring commitment to a liberal pro-Western way of life. At times it has been only his personal valour that stood out against a mutiny. Through all the turbulence of Arab nationalism, the King has maintained Jordan as a friend—often the only friend—of the West. Both the West and his countrymen should salute him.

From Dr Chris Green

Sir, The Ashworth enquiry (report and leading article, August 6) was prompted by the Channel 4 documentary, *Cutting Edge*. It is constructive to note that the previous major independent public enquiry into abusive practices at a special hospital, the Boynton report on Rampton Hospital, was also occasioned by a TV documentary, *ITV's The Secret Hospital*, broadcast in May 1979.

The unhealthy influence which certain elements of the Prison Officers' Association exert over special hospital culture has been ongoing for decades; it is well known, and a frequent topic of conversation amongst those who work in special hospitals. Until recently, when the Special Hospitals Service Authority was formed, special hospitals reported directly to the Department of Health.

It is regrettably clear that successive governments have avoided dealing with the type of problems raised by the Ashworth report, unless forced to do so by media pressure. If managers within special hospitals are to succeed in eliminating abusive practices, it is essential that they have proper direction and support from their authorities. I am tempted to conclude that over the years the authorities have opted for the "quiet life", rather than supply this.

Yours faithfully,
CHRIS GREEN
(Consultant forensic psychiatrist,
Stockton Hall Psychiatric Hospital,
The Village,
Stockton-on-the-Forest, York.)

From the Chief Executive of the Special Hospitals Service Authority

Sir, Your editorial referring to the publication of the report by Sir Louis Blom-Cooper on Ashworth Hospital owed more to indignation than to a full appreciation of the facts.

The special hospitals have indeed been isolated from the mainstream of the NHS, which is precisely the

From the Earl of Longford

Sir, The suggestion in your leading article that the prison service "should certainly be allowed to bid for Ashworth, but so should many other interested bodies, commercial or otherwise" (my *italics*) is preposterous.

Indeed, as one who has paid many visits to Park Lane (now

trains in France

From Mr G. J. Wiseman

Sir, Mr Robin Neillands's view of France's railways ("What a great way to run a railway", *Life & Times*, August 3) needs to be put into some perspective.

I have 30 years' experience of SNCF operations, and as a rail timetables expert know only too well the frustrations of travel on SNCF's often infrequent services, such as between the regional capitals of Caen and Rennes, connected by just two direct trains per day—and these are just after 6pm.

Local authorities are not to be allowed, in their dealings with external suppliers, to specify possession of British Standard 5750—a measure of quality of supply. BS5750 is to be regarded as "anti-competitive".

Over the last few years BS5750 and its European counterpart have played a major role in dragging supplier quality up to acceptable levels. Increasingly, purchasers have tended not to trade with suppliers who do not possess or cannot demonstrate standards which would meet the requirements of BS5750.

In preventing local authorities from requiring assured quality systems and standards in their contracts, this government is condemning consumers of local authority services to accept contracts in which price rather than quality is the determining factor.

Yours sincerely,
ROB IRVING
(Liberal Democrat,
London Borough of Sutton,
Civic Offices,
Sutton, Surrey.)

From the Chief Executive of the Library Association

Sir, Mr T. W. Stragg (letter, August 5) is correct in understanding the concept of the British Library as a library of last resort. This is so for some of its collections and for many of its readers; but for librarians and information scientists the British Library's Information Science Service (Biss) houses the special collection on librarianship and information science that for the profession makes it the library of first resort.

In addition, Biss has been built on the collection that was established by the Library Association as its own library but which was passed to the BL in the 1970s. It is for these reasons, amongst others, that the Library Association's members have access to the BL as a membership benefit.

Yours faithfully,
ROSS SHIMMON
(Chief Executive,
The Library Association,
7 Ridgmount Street, WC1.)

From Mr Adrian Langinger

Sir, Perhaps Mr Booker (letter, August 10) should have taken his family by train when travelling in Italy. I recently travelled second class from Pisa to Ventimiglia on the French border, a five-hour journey and a distance of about 180 miles, for £10. For my return journey, I felt I could afford the extra and travel first class.

Yours faithfully,
ADRIAN LANGINGER,
90 Kensington Park Road, W11.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 071-782 5046.

Throwing fresh light on the role of special hospitals

From Dr Chris Green

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It is regrettably clear that successive governments have avoided dealing with the type of problems raised by the Ashworth report, unless forced to do so by media pressure.

If managers within special hospitals are to succeed in eliminating abusive practices, it is essential that they have proper direction and support from their authorities. I am tempted to conclude that over the years the authorities have opted for the "quiet life", rather than supply this.

Within the body of his report he identifies many examples of good practice and devoted work by staff within the hospital while rightly highlighting unacceptable behaviour by a "significant minority" over a period dating back to 1985. We have already made clear that such behaviour is unacceptable and will be punished.

This authority is strongly committed to providing care and therapy for seriously ill psychiatric patients who need that care within a secure setting. Its hospital work increasingly closely with NHS and other agencies to provide a full service for individuals who need intensive support over a long period of time.

We welcome the proposal of a review to look at the future pattern of service which we will contribute to that review. In the meantime, we are committed to providing hospital care of a high standard.

Yours faithfully,
C. KAYE,
(Chief Executive,
Special Hospitals Service Authority,
Charles House,
375 Kensington High Street, W14.)

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As for SNCF being the largest network in Western Europe, it is only the largest because France is the largest country. In fact British Rail has 16,580 km of track in Britain of 229,870 sq km. France is a country of 543,055 sq km, where SNCF has 34,322 km of railway twice as much railway but in a country over twice the size.

None of the above detracts from my liking for train travel in France, returning time and again, and I will again be seeking out new scenic routes to sample later this month, although I have an unfair advantage in having access to a copy of the weighty SNCF timetable tomes.

Yours faithfully,

GORDON WISEMAN.

13 Harrow Lodge, Eaton Road,

Sumon, Surrey.

August 5.

When to fight

From Mr Edward Hay

Sir, Lord Owen ("When it is right to fight", August 4) might like to put himself in the position of an infantry colonel, commanding a battalion which has been ordered to Yugoslavia.

His men will ask: who are the enemy? Are they permitted to shoot anyone carrying a weapon— including women? How do they communicate with the local population? Faced with tanks, can they expect armoured support?

The families of his soldiers may ask the commanding officer what vital British interests are at stake to justify the loss of their sons' lives.

I can appreciate that Lord Owen's conscience has been stricken. What he must explain is why military intervention is justified in Yugoslavia but not in Rwanda or Somalia.

If deadlines have to be imposed, why must they occur in August?

Yours faithfully,

EDWARD HAY.

Eaton Road, Ecclesall, Chester.

August 4.

Resolving disputes

From Mr David Miles

Sir, The statement in your leader, "Judges galore" (July 25), that "ADR (alternative dispute resolution) is user-friendly to the public, but therefore not to the legal fraternity" reflects a common view. It is not necessarily a true view, however.

In today's stringent times, any lawyer involved in civil litigation is acutely aware of the tight financial constraints

SOCIAL NEWS

Birthdays today

Miss Elizabeth Appleby, QC, 50; Dame Frances Clode, former chairman, WRVS, 89; Lord Colbroke, 70; Vice-Admiral Sir Kenneth Eaton, 58; Air Marshal Sir Maurice Heath, 83; General Sir Patrick Howard-Dobson, 71; Sir Anthony Jolliffe, former Lord Mayor of London, 54; Dr Tommy Kemp, physician and rugby player, 77; Mr Mark Knopfler, singer-songwriter and guitarist, 43; Mr Norris McWhirter, founder editor, *Guinness Book of Records*, 67; Mr Flora Milner-Gash, chairman, Unilever NV, 59; Sir Robin Nicholson, metallurgist, 58; Baroness Phillips, 82; Lord Renfrew, QC, 84; Mr Peter West, sports commentator, 72; Poles for Gran, Zellick, principal, Queen Mary and Westfield College, 44.

Latest wills

Stephen Alastair Morton, of London, SW6, Reformer of Devizes, left estate valued at £541,923 net. Edmund Purcell Skone James, QC, of Shordings, Bromley, Kent, copyright specialist, left estate valued at £655,918 net. Diana Marion Bonner Wood, of London NW8, chartered surveyor, left estate valued at £1,379,114 net. She left £60,000 to the Distressed Gentlemen's Aid Association and certain furniture and other effects to the National Trust. Edward George Groves, of Chigwell, Essex, licensed bookmaker, died in his sleep, leaving his estate valued at £1,164,244 net. Ellen Bennett, of Farmhill, North Yorkshire, left estate valued at £1,910,993 net. Leslie Bernard Cawtebury, of Farthing, Hampshire, left estate valued at £1,584,057 net. Dr Michael Lee Thomas, of London SW10, left estate valued at £668,315 net.

Ferries threaten shortest flight

BY KERRY GILL

APART from archaeological remains and birds, the Orkney island of Papa Westray is famous for the shortest scheduled flight in the world, just two minutes between taking off from Westray and landing on a cowpat-strewn field on Papa Westray a mile away.

The daily flights, operated by Loganair since 1967 with a 20 minute check-in time, have been recorded in *The Guinness Book of Records* ever since and a Captain Andrew Alsp, helped by a strong tail wind, once cut the time to 58 seconds.

The airline is, however, struggling to maintain its inter-island flights in the face of competition from new ferry services run by the local council. The 80 or so residents on Papa Westray fear the £11 return flights could be the first to go, along with their entry in the record books.

The little twin-engined Islander aircraft are a familiar sight throughout the archipelago, hopping from island to island, usually spattered in cow dung since, apart from Kirkwall, the runways are grass strips on fields. Jim Rendall, the Papa Westray postmaster, said: "This would be a disaster for the island. It is a great source of pride to everybody."

Loganair, aware of the flight's attraction for tourists, prints T-shirts with the motto "I have flown the world's shortest flight", and Mr

Anniversaries

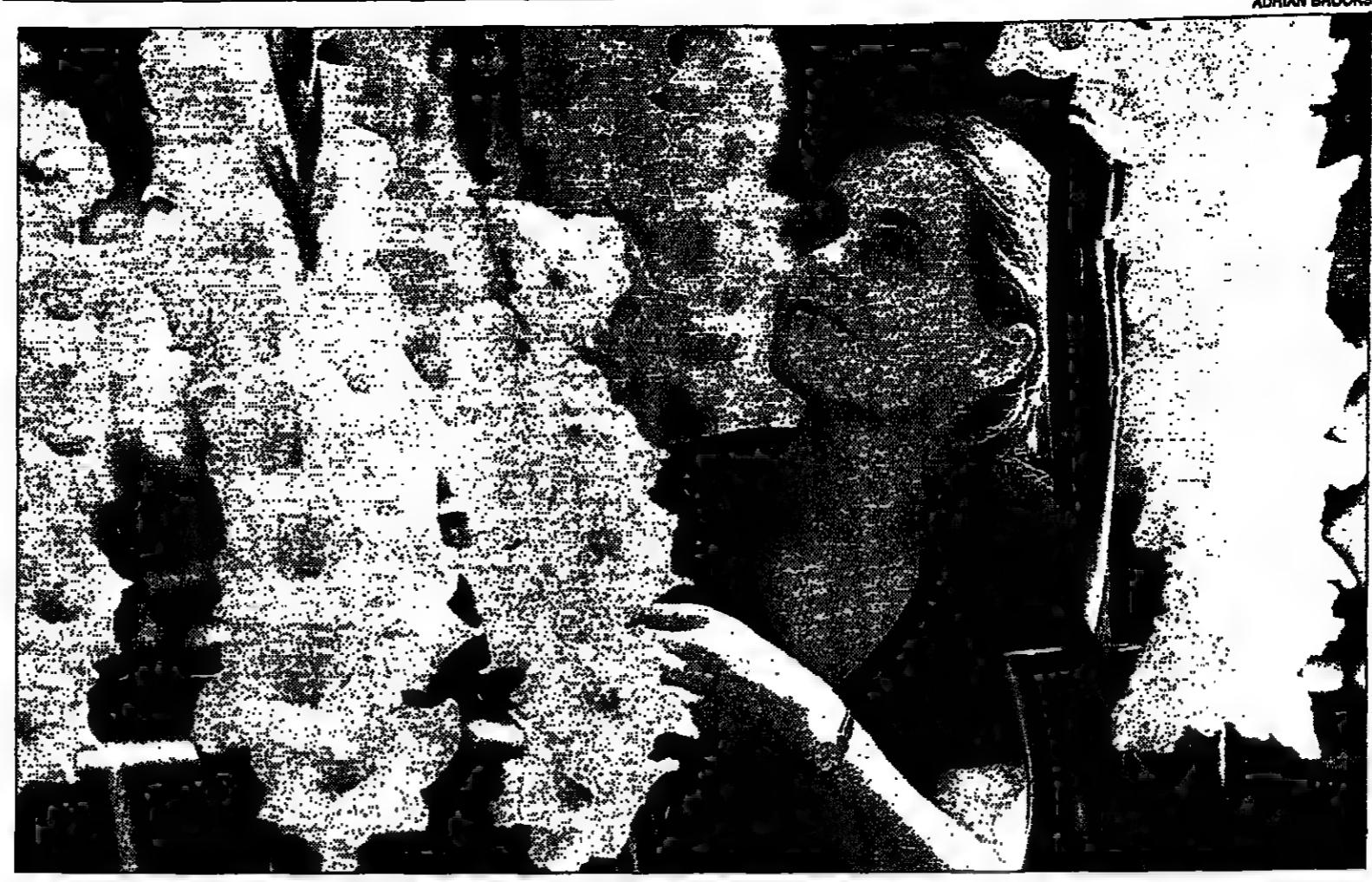
BIRTHS: Thomas Bewick, engraver, Newcastle, 1753; George IV, reigned 1820-30, London, 1762; Robert Southey, Poet Laureate, 1813-43, Bristol, 1774; Sir Joseph Banks, composer, York, 1838; Cecil B. De Mille, film producer, Massachusetts, 1881; Erwin Schrödinger, physicist, Nobel laureate 1933, Vienna, 1887. DEATHS: Nahum Tate, Poet Laureate, 1692-1715, London, 1715; Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh, statesman, committed suicide, North Gray Place, Kent, 1822; William Blake, poet and artist, London, 1827; George Stephenson, builder of "The Rocket", Tipton, Derbyshire, 1848; Sir William Jackson Hooker, director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, 1841-65, London, 1865; James Lovell, poet and diplomat, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1891; Arthur Griffith, Irish statesman, Dublin, 1922; Archibald Jamieson, composer, Oswestry, Cheshire, 1925. THEATRE: Maria, novelist, Nobel laureate 1929, Zurich, 1955; Ian Fleming, creator of James Bond, Canterbury, 1964; Sir Ernst Chain, biochemist, Nobel laureate 1945, 1979; Henry Fonda actor, 1982.

Royal president

The Prince of Wales to be centenary president of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy during its centenary year in 1994.

Lord Braine of Wheatley

The barony conferred upon Sir Bernard Braine has been gazetted by the name, style and title of Baron Braine of Wheatley, of Rayleigh in the County of Essex.



Winning blooms: Anthea Michaelson, a student gardener at Wisley, among the gladiolus competition entries yesterday

Autumn hues add colour to late summer show

BY ALAN TOOGOOD, HORTICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

A WIDE range of garden plants with late-summer interest, with just a hint of early autumn, is packed into many small exhibits at the Royal Horticultural Society's summer flower show, which opened at Westminster yesterday.

A selection of late summer rock-garden plants is being featured by W. E. Th. Ingwersen, of Gravetye, West Sussex, which can now boast 233 consecutive exhibits at RHS shows. The selection includes the fuchsia-like *Zauschneria californica* "Dublin" with brilliant vermilion tubular flowers, and blue and white campanulas.

A new, easily grown gentian from the Caucasus and northern Turkey, *Gentiana paradoxo*, with brilliant pure blue flowers, is being shown for the first time by Edrom Nurseries, of Coldingham, Berwickshire, in their collection of summer-flowering alpines. With masses of tiny blue star-shaped flowers is the old but still quite rare *Cyananthus sherriffii*, which appreciates the impeccable

drainage of a dry-stone wall. There is a good selection of plants from warmer climates, including the most comprehensive collection of peperomias (greenhouse or houseplants grown for their attractive foliage) ever assembled outside a botanic garden. The collection was put together by the Saintpaulia and Houseplant Society, with a number of plants loaned by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and the RHS garden at Wisley.

The exhibit reflects the diversity of habit in this genus. There is the climbing *Peperomia polysticha* with tiny heart-shaped leaves, which looks like a philodendron; *P. fraseri*, the only species grown purely for its flowers (conical heads of cream blooms on red stems); *P. "Mouse Ear"* with soft velvety leaves; and the trailing *P. rotundifolia pilosissima* with tiny round fleshy marbled leaves.

Others are quite colourful, such as multicoloured *P. clusiifolia* "Variegata" with cream, bright pink and cream leaves, and *P. glabella*

"Variegata", with heavily variegated cream and green. Marston Exotics, of Madley, Hereford and Worcester, are showing carnivorous plants, from *Dionaea muscipula* (Venus fly trap) with its jaw-like traps, to bold sarracenia (trumpet pitchers) with erect, hooded traps.

Tropical gesneriads are being shown by Dibey's Elenchedy Nurseries of Ruthin, Clwyd, including some unusual trailing kinds for hanging baskets, which deserve to be more widely grown as houseplants: *X. Codonanthes* "Tambourine" with tubular pink and cream flowers, and *Nematanthus*, also with tubular flowers but in fiery colours.

Several competitions are taking place, including that of the Saintpaulia and Houseplant Society. Here, the best houseplant is *Begonia "Looking Glass"* (metallic-silver leaves with red undersides), which has gained the Margot Isaacs trophy for David Rhodes and John Rockliffe, of Nazeing, Essex. The best saintpaulia (African violet) is S.

"Midnight Wave" (wavy leaves and frilled violet flowers) shown by Margaret Reynolds of Ickleford, Hertfordshire, and awarded the silver jubilee trophy.

In the RHS ornamental plants competition, Mrs C M Bowerman, of Coldwatham, West Sussex, is a leading prizewinner in the heather section, where her exhibit of *Erica cinerea* cultivars (light pink "Margaret Bowerman", red "Alfred Bowerman" and deep pink "Champs Hill") has gained a first prize.

In the RHS gladiolus competition, Mr S Price, of Romford, Essex, has won the Foremark challenge cup for 12 cultivars, and a Simmonds medal for the best spike of small-flowered gladiolus. A Simmonds medal for the best spike of large-flowered gladiolus has been won by Mr S Moorhouse, of Wanstead, east London, with a cultivar of his own raising.

The RHS show, New Horticultural Hall, Greycoat Street, Westminster, is open from 10am to 5pm today.

Shooting stars put on a heavenly light show

BY NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

THE skies will be filled with shooting stars and fireballs of cosmic dust set alight by the Earth's atmosphere over the next few days as one of nature's most spectacular light shows reaches its peak.

This year's arrival of the Perseids meteor could be one of the most dramatic this century. Some astronomers believe that the comet that has spawned these annual collisions might have a 130 year orbit and could be making its return carrying bigger and more densely concentrated meteors in its wake.

The earliest recorded sightings linked to the Perseids dates to May 22 in 12BC during the Han Dynasty. Records discovered by Tian Shan, a Chinese astronomer, from the reign of Yuan-Yan, link meteors as large as

believed to have been forged from comet Swift-Tuttle which may be the same as comet Kegler, cross the Earth's orbit between August 1-21. They reach their peak today, with excellent activity also possible tomorrow and Friday as the Earth passes through the densest parts of the stream. As many as 50 meteors an hour smashing into the atmosphere at 60km per hour can leave luminous trails across the sky.

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basins and others the size of hens' eggs, indicating that some heavy objects are in the stream.

Bill Napier, an honorary research fellow at the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh, an authority on comets, said:

"This happened in May not August but these showers do process so the date will slowly drift". He said that a violent meteor shower reportedly prompted Pope Urban II to convene a council in 1095 to authorise the first Crusade.

Mark Bailey, a mathematics lecturer and expert on comets and meteors at Liverpool's John Moores University, said: "You will see meteors almost wherever you look but the highest concentration should be in the north-east".

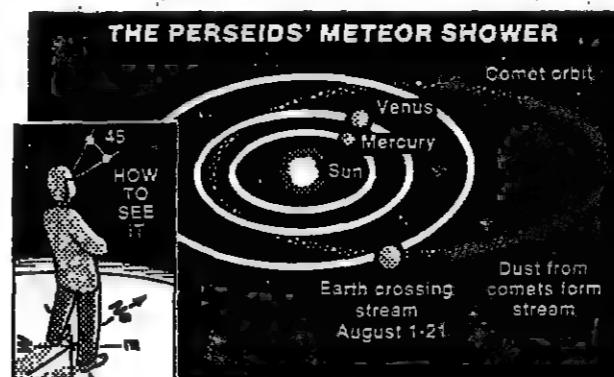
The best time to view is at 11pm. To get the best view Dr Bailey advises going into the countryside where there is less interference from reflecting city light. "If you live in a city go to a park or go to a part of your back garden that is shielded from street lights so your eyes become as accustomed as possible to the dark."

One snap to a spectacular

show could be the moonlight

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Telephone 071 481 4000

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Telefax 071 782 7827

DEATHS

LEGAL NOTICES

UNGORD - On August 7th, 1992, peacefully, Margaret Elizabeth, aged 86, of Northgate, Callington, Cornwall, beloved daughter of the late Gwilym and Elizabeth (nee) Ungord. Funeral Service will be held at Callington Crematorium on Wednesday August 12th at 11.30 am. Family flowers only please. Donations to the R.S.P.B. may be sent to the R.S.P.B., c/o A.W. Lyman, Funeral Directors, Robertsons, Nottingham, NG2 6QZ.

CAMERON - On Sunday August 9th 1992, in Hospital at Cambridge. Jeanne Lee Turner aged 82, widow of Alan, son of Mr and Mrs Alan Cameron, of Cambridge. Funeral Service at St James' Church, Cambridge, on Friday August 14th at 11 am. No flowers.

MASTERS - On August 9th, peacefully at home, Guy Holland, beloved husband of Elizabeth Jane and father of Charles and Helen. All enquiries to J.H. Kenyon, 49 Mansfield Road, W8, tel. 071 937-0757.

HEQUINSON - On August 9th, 1992, suddenly, Colonel Edward Frederick (Ted) TD, MC, much loved husband of Shirley and Dame Elizabeth, and dear son of Tom and Elizabeth. All enquiries to J.H. Kenyon, 49 Mansfield Road, W8, tel. 071 937-0757.

ROBERTS - On August 9th, peacefully at home, Mrs Muriel Roberts, aged 80, beloved wife of Norman and devoted mother and grandmother. All enquiries to J.H. Kenyon, 49 Mansfield Road, W8, tel. 071 937-0757.

LE GUESINE - On August 9th, 1992, suddenly, Colonel Edward Frederick (Ted) TD, MC, much loved husband of Shirley and Dame Elizabeth, and dear son of Tom and Elizabeth. All enquiries to J.H. Kenyon, 49 Mansfield Road, W8, tel. 071 937-0757.

COLES - On August 9th, peacefully at home, Mrs Muriel Roberts, aged 80, beloved wife of Norman and devoted mother and grandmother. All enquiries to J.H. Kenyon, 49 Mansfield Road, W8, tel. 071 937-0757.

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OBITUARIES

SIR ERNEST JONES-PARRY

Sir Ernest Jones-Parry, executive director of the International Sugar Organisation from 1965 to 1978, died on August 6 aged 84. He was born in Rhuddlan on July 16, 1908.

ERNEST Jones-Parry began his professional life as an historian but, like many of his fellow students, he was recruited after the outbreak of the second world war as a civil servant and went on to a distinguished career.

Educated at Bangor in the University of Wales and at the London School of Economics, he began teaching at Aberystwyth in 1935 and in 1936 published *The Spanish Marriages*, which as recently as 1990 was being praised for the cogency of its analysis of Anglo-French relations in the 1840s. Subsequently he edited for the Royal Historical Society two volumes of *The Correspondence of Lord Aberdeen and Princess Lieven, 1832-34*, published in 1938 and 1939.

His wartime experience, mostly in the Ministry of Food but also in the Treasury, revealed administrative skills of a high order and after the war ended he was persuaded to remain in the public service, initially to work on what in the jargon of Whitehall is known as "Establishment", the handing of staff.

His kindness and warmth made him particularly effective with staff welfare as well as in the handling of personal problems and tragedies. But he was also very successful in relations with the civil service staff associations, first in the Ministry of Food and later as Director of Establishments in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

He proved to be equally effective in both departments



with the handling of commodity administration. As wartime food scarcities were gradually overcome, problems emerging as a legacy from wartime controls proved to be particularly difficult with sugar, in particular because of the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement. The transition from years of shortage was a relatively rapid one.

After the war ended the United Kingdom had encouraged production in the Commonwealth, especially in the West Indies but also in Mauritius, Australia and South Africa. Understandably these countries were hesitant about long-term investment, the future of which was uncertain.

In 1938 he married Mary Powell, who gave him active support throughout their long married life. She survives him with their two sons, Rupert and Tristram.

EBBE CARLSSON

Ebbe Carlsson, journalist, book publisher and key figure behind the scenes in Swedish political life, died in hospital on August 3 aged 44 of an AIDS-related illness. He was born on September 28, 1947.

EBBE Carlsson was a magnet for controversy, featuring prominently in several of the most dramatic episodes of Swedish political life during the past two decades, although he never held elected office. He became a household name in June 1988 when his bodyguard was apprehended at the Swedish border with a suitcase full of illegal eavesdropping equipment. It was revealed that the book publisher had, with the approval of Anna-Greta Leijon, the minister of justice, conducted a private investigation into the assassination on February 26, 1986, of Olof Palme, the prime minister and friend of Carlsson.

The scandal which ensued led to the resignation of the justice minister, the head of the national police force and the head of the Swedish secret service. Carlsson was found guilty of participating in the attempted smuggling of wire-tapping equipment into the country, which was to be used to eavesdrop on Kurdish nationalists suspected of the prime minister's murder. The book publisher continued his quest to clear his name and to find out the truth about the Palme assassination.

and the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement was designed to assure them of continuing markets in the longer term. With the gradual abolition of government trading in the 1950s, machinery to replace its assurance had to be devised: it took the form of a Sugar Board, empowered to buy Commonwealth sugar at agreed prices and to trade in it, any losses being passed on to the UK consumer. As the assistant secretary concerned, Jones-Parry was responsible for preparation of the scheme leading to what became the Sugar Act of 1956.

Against this background it was not surprising that when in 1965 a head had to be found for the International Sugar Council Jones-Parry was chosen. As executive director of what was subsequently renamed the International Sugar Organisation, he remained until 1978. The role of the organisation was to operate an international commodity agreement of the sort which is now out of fashion. Its aim was to regulate supplies on the world market to avoid extremes of high and low prices.

In 1914, at the suggestion of Thomas Hardy, his own dramatisation of *The Dynasts* for Harley Granville-Barker was performed to raise money for the war effort. He wrote in the part of the Waiting Maid for Gertrude, to add a low interest to the plot. Her performance was poignant and very personal. As she sang:

*My love's gone a-fighting
Where war-trumpets call
The wrongs o' men fighting
Wi' carbine and ball ...*

she well knew that her own fiance had fallen at Gallipoli. In 1920 Gertrude played Eustacia Vye in the Hardy Players' performance of *The Return of the Native*. Hardy was very much involved in the direction of the play, showing the players how to fight with their wooden swords and humming tunes for them to incorporate in *The Minotaur's Play of St George*. Her own performance as Eustacia Vye was "stunning", and Hardy described her as "exactly the physical type" he had in mind for Eustacia Vye, "all and somewhat critical of claims from Brussels for the contribution of the European Community to the welfare of the Third World".

Jones-Parry was a well-rounded character. A good cricketer in his youth, he was passionately interested in both cricket and rugby football, especially when Wales was involved. He had a great knowledge and love of literature, his reading of poetry, which was superb, was much admired. He was a great admirer of the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, the European Community to the welfare of the Third World.

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BT bill pegging will be selective

BY ROSS TIEMAN
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BT HAS agreed to peg telephone price increases to 7.5 per cent below inflation for the next four years, but many of Britain's 18 million domestic telephone users are unlikely to see real cuts in their bills.

Vivienne Peters, chief executive of the Telephone Users' Association, said benefits of the tougher price control regime agreed yesterday between BT and OfTEL, its regulator, would be concentrated on business users and households which make the most calls.

With inflation, as measured by the Retail Prices Index, now at 3.9 per cent and expected to remain low, BT should be on course to deliver real price cuts to users. Under the existing formula — RPI minus 6.25 per cent — which expires next July, most customers will see their bills continue to rise because inflation was high, and BT concentrated price cuts on long-distance and international calls.

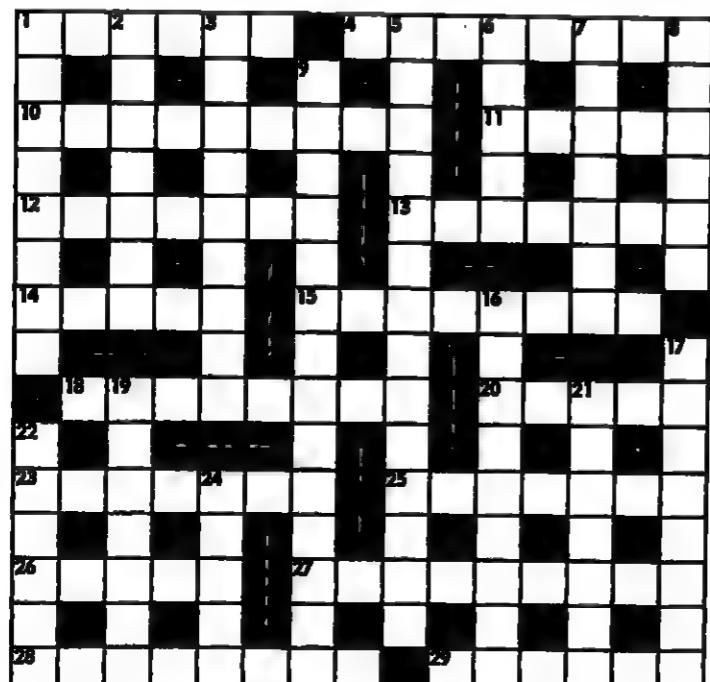
Under the new formula, which takes effect next August, cuts are expected to continue to be focused in these areas because BT can choose where to make the cuts within a "basket" of prices on which the formula is calculated. The median household bill will still be allowed to rise in line with inflation. Domestic line rentals will go on rising by RPI plus 2 per cent.

Only householders who pay more than the average bill of £43 a quarter are likely to see price rises at less than the rate of inflation, BT said, but there would be an extension of the low-user rebate scheme to take in four million subscribers, more than double the present number, and connection charges would be limited to a maximum of £9.9.

Although OfTEL's proposals were published more than two months ago, BT said an agreement had been delayed by difficulty in establishing workable arrangements for implementation. The company had campaigned hard for the right to make bigger increases in household bills, arguing that three-quarters of families used the phone too little to cover the cost of providing a service. OfTEL insisted that BT should be prepared to accept lower returns from households.

Competitors named, page 15

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 18,995



ACROSS
1 Once the vehicle for the back-seat driver (6).
4 The sort of sleep that is divine in Wagner (8).
10 House finished — few left at this stage (9).
11 Watering place in the country (5).
12 Handle the artisan finally made of baked clay (7).
13 More work to the point of being impractical (7).
14 Old rider returns to take part in national hunt season (5).
15 With this one could make lofty observations (5-3).
18 Tackles production tries (8).
20 Chapter four involves an Ionian island (5).
23 Concession by the Queen for singers (7).
25 Iodine's broken up into the smallest possible amounts (7).
26 Kids follow one to the pictures (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 18,994

ENCYCLICAL BASH
S A A M D I E
P A R I S H P U M P A R E A
Y A T E J U M S D
T W E E R A R E E S H O W
P A I D I H O I A
L A Y A B O U T T I P P E T
A R M C C E
S T R A I N F A M I L I A R
H E D S S N N B
P A L S O R A V E E W R A
O I E V M B R A
I D E S C O V E N I A N T E R
H V U N L I A
T O E D F R I T I L L A R Y

This puzzle was solved within 30 minutes by 32 per cent of the competitors at the 1992 Bristol regional final of The Times InterCity Crossword Championship.

Concise Crossword
Life & Times section, page 11



New horizons: Marie Radcliffe works for a textile company in Yorkshire during the week, but dons combat gear and boots for jumping out of planes at the weekend

High flyer drops in from Civvy Street

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

MARIE Radcliffe has become the first woman to be recruited directly from civilian life into the Parachute Regiment by joining the 4th Battalion, one of three Territorial Army parachute regiments.

A qualified parachutist before being recruited, the 28-year-old private has already been chosen as a member of 4 Para's free-fall display team, known as the Black Lanyards. The regiment is based at Thornbury, near Bradford. She works for a textile company in Ebbw Vale, Gwent. At weekends she wears combat gear and boots for moorland manoeuvres or jumping out of planes.

She said: "I wanted to combine the excitement of parachuting with something more worthwhile and the Paras seemed ideal. Other girls might think that I'm a bit strange but I'm still a woman and feminine. But I do like the *Private Benjamin* tag [a film starring Goldie Hawn as a US Army recruit] and love to put on my combat gear and get stuck on my face."

"I take it very seriously and would fight for my country with the rest of the regiment

Radcliffe: "I do like the *Private Benjamin* tag"

UN will use armed force to secure food delivery for starving Somalia

FROM SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT, IN MOGADISHU

THE United Nations is to resort to military intervention in an effort to end the suffering of Somalia's starving millions. Armed "security personnel" are to take over the main port in the capital, Mogadishu, where 200 people are dying every day.

Within a month, roads leading to distribution points will be secured to help to deliver food to the 1.5 million Somalis facing starvation after 18 months of civil war. The move, which has been accepted by all the warring factions in the country, is a big breakthrough for the United Nations special representative to Somalia, Muhammad Sahnoun. After six months of tense negotiations between the five factions whose fighting has reduced the country to rubble and anarchy, food aid to Somalia has been regularly hijacked by warring factions and either distributed to their own men or sold on the open market.

Mr Sahnoun said yesterday that the Somali National Alliance, an uneasy coalition of four main factions, led by

General Muhammad Farah Aidid, accepted that 500 troops should be deployed in Mogadishu harbour, where vast quantities of food are held up by daily fighting and looting. The deployment has been accepted, but some details have yet to be finalised and negotiations are still going on," he said.

Mr Sahnoun, an Algerian diplomat, is expected to fly to Baidera, in western Somalia, to complete the deal with the SNA, which is made up of the Somali Patriotic Front, General Aidid's faction of the United Somali Congress, the Somaliland Democratic Movement and the South Somaliland National Movement.

General Aidid has been blamed for holding up the deployment of United Nations troops. However, Mr Sahnoun said yesterday that the general was meeting considerable opposition to the presence of foreign troops on Somaliland soil from within his own army, and from the SPM, led by general Omar Jessie, a member of the Dardon clan and a former enemy of General Aidid.

Mr Sahnoun was anxious to point out that no United Nations troops would be used in the traditional "peacekeeping role", and that their mandate would be to ensure that food entered Somalia safely. "It is very important that they are looked upon as security personnel and not troops or soldiers. Their role will be strictly humanitarian."

The leader of the United Nations military observers already deployed in Mogadishu, Brigadier General Amadir Shabani, of Pakistan, said yesterday that as his country had already offered troops to the United Nations for Somalia, would take

only four or five days to deploy Pakistani soldiers. "We have already selected the doctors and nurses we need and it would take no time to get the troops lined up."

So far, groups such as Save the Children and the International Committee of the Red Cross have been able to carry out feeding programmes in some parts of Somalia, including Mogadishu, but this has been at vast expense, because of the high cost of flying in to remote areas and to limited effect, because only small amounts than can be carried by plane.

Aid agencies welcomed news of the United Nations intervention, but some had reservations about how armed Somalia might react.

"The key really is that people accept them as a humanitarian protection force, rather than any form of occupation force," David Shearer, of Save the Children, said.

• Brussels: The European Community is preparing to give £2.8 million in food aid to Somali refugees. The package will largely go to those in Yemen and Kenya. (AFP)

Ashdown affair man cleared of burglary

Continued from page 1
the burglar, whoever he was, knows that you can make a rich living."

The judge said that although the documents related to a prominent MP that crime must be dealt with by way of a deterrent sentence regardless of whether it referred to a person in an exalted position or person in a lowly one.

The jury found Berkowitz guilty of dishonestly handling stolen property by a majority verdict. They cleared him of stealing the documents and £233.63 from the offices of Bates, Wells & Braithwaite in the City where Andrew Phillips, a senior partner, was Mr Ashdown's solicitor.

Berkowitz, 45, of Lansdowne Street, Hove, East Sussex, had denied both charges. The jury, which took six hours and twelve minutes to reach their verdict, with eight having asked the usher for headache tablets, was told by the judge that it had not known of Berkowitz's background because of the laws of British justice. "Sometimes we lean over too far," he said.

The court had heard that the memorandum compiled by Mr Phillips after a meeting with the Liberal Democrat leader in 1990 to discuss the affair had been placed in a safe in the basement.

Shortly after a break-in in January this year, when cash was stolen, it came to light that the document was also missing when Patricia Howard, who was besieged in her home by News of the World reporters wanting to ask her about the affair, telephoned Mr Phillips.

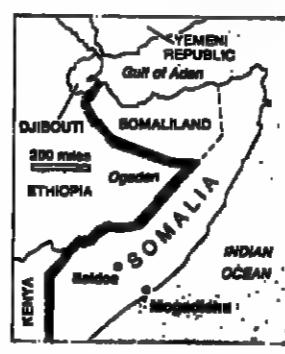
An injunction was served for the return of the documents and copies. Mr Ashdown, aware of the rumours, denied the *News of the World* their exclusive and Berkowitz his money by holding a press conference to give details of the affair in 1986.

Berkowitz told the court that he felt he was a pawn in a complex set-up to discredit Mr Ashdown.

Berkowitz has been sentenced to a total of 21 years in prison since 1973. Many of the crimes were burglaries of solicitors' offices and other business premises.

Detective inspector Karen Young of City police said yesterday that there were no plans to reopen the inquiry into the burglary.

Profit motive, page 3



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Manchester 8.45 pm to 5.45 am
Penzance 8.48 pm to 6.09 am

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Motown label helps record company's recession-proof tune

PolyGram strikes a high note

BY WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU
EUROPEAN BUSINESS
CORRESPONDENT

POLYGRAM, the music and film company, again proved that its business is one of the most recession-proof.

The company, which is quoted in Amsterdam and is 80 per cent owned by Philips, the Dutch consumer electronics group, saw net income rise 16.5 per cent to F1.71 million (£54 million) in the first six months of this year.

Although sales growth slowed during the period, sales remained firm at F1.298 billion, an increase of 10.1 per cent.

Over the past two years, the company has conducted an ambitious investment programme, which ranges from a 30 per cent stake in Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Holdings to a distribution agreement with Motown Records, the legendary American record label.

In America, the world's largest music market, the company increased market share from 11.5 per cent to 14 per cent as American sales rose 46 per cent, including consolidations.

The deal with Motown, "has exceeded our expectations", Alain Levy, president of PolyGram, said. "I am confident that our work with Motown will help PolyGram's involvement in black music to grow substantially," he added.

However, the company said that this growth was achieved "despite difficult trading conditions in Europe and a weaker release schedule for classical



Singing the right songs: Jessye Norman, one of PolyGram's best-selling vocal artists

music than in previous years".

The best selling vocal artists during the period included Cecilia Bartoli, Plácido Domingo, Kiri Te Kanawa, Jessye Norman and Luciano Pavarotti. *Def Leppard's Adrenalize* and Elton John's

The One were among the most successful pop albums.

New releases in the second half of this year include *Sir George Solti on Decca*, in celebration of his 80th birthday, and a audio and video edition of Wagner's opera.

The company is also satisfied with Really Useful Holdings. The theme song for the *Barcelona Olympic Games, Amigos Para Siempre*, written by Sir Andrew, has been released by Polydor.

PolyGram hopes that the

extra business will gain an extra boost through the launch this year of the digital compact cassette. Mr Levy said he expects "progress" for the year as a whole, but added that there were "few signs of world economic recovery".

Rea falls despite cutting bad debt provisions

BY NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

PROFITS have tumbled at Rea Brothers, the mini merchant bank, because of a slump in income and advances. The bank suffered a 29 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £284,000 in the first half of the year even though it cut its bad debt provisions from £400,000 to only £90,000.

The damage was caused by a 15 per cent reduction in Rea's balance sheet to £255 million, which included an

Bowater deal will not be referred

BY OUR CITY STAFF

THE trade and industry department will not refer Bowater's acquisition of Quoteplan, which trades as Cope Allman Packaging, to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

However, the department is to refer Bowater's acquisition of DRG Packaging from Pembridge Investments to the commission on the advice of Sir Bryan Carsberg, the director of Fair Trading, unless suitable undertakings are offered by Bowater to remedy the expected adverse effects of the deal.

Bowater announced the ac-

quisition, costing a total £444 million, at the beginning of March.

A £34 million rights issue to partly fund the acquisitions met with an enthusiastic response from shareholders, with nearly 95 per cent of the rights taken up.

A spokeswoman for Bowater had no immediate comment, but said that the company would issue a formal reaction soon.

Outside parties have until August 19 to register their views on the deal with the Office of Fair Trading.

Exceptional items lift Manchester Ship Canal

BY MATTHEW BOND

MANCHESTER Ship Canal Company, which is 72 per cent owned by Peel Holdings, has reported pre-tax profits of £7.8 million in the six months to end-June, well ahead of the £4.8 million it reported in the first half of 1991.

However, all the improvement came from £3 million of exceptional items, generated by compensation for the termination of an operating contract at Ellesmere Port container terminal and subsequent asset sales, and a separate compensation payment for giving up a pre-emption right over land at Trafford Park.

If these exceptions are stripped out, profits declined slightly from £5.1 million to £4.8 million.

Robert Hough, chairman, said the company had performed well despite the continuing difficult economic conditions.

Operating profits from the port operation rose by almost 21 per cent to £3.2 million, with cost-saving magnifying a 3.3 per cent increase in port income to £9.4 million. Turnover was static at 4.1 million tonnes.

The group's property activities continue to be hit hard by falling tenant demand and over-supply. When its Harbour City development is completed shortly, MSC will have property with a potential rent roll of some £2 million standing empty. Property income in the first half was £2.8 million, slightly below last year's comparable figure because of asset sales.

Mr Hough said that the group was a long-term investor in its property portfolio and has the financial strength to wait for lettings to come through. With no interest payments capitalised, the interest charge in the profit and loss account rose from £0.8 million to £1.2 million.

A March balance sheet prepared for Peel's full-year results showed net assets rising from £137 million to £154 million, following the revaluation of dredging deposit and waste disposal sites. With borrowings being further reduced in the second quarter, MSC finished the half year with gearing of under 6 per cent. As normal no interim dividend is being paid.

North West Water bids for Argentine contract

NORTH West Water has qualified for the final stage of bidding for a 30-year contract to maintain and expand the water and waste-water system in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Argentine government is expected to award the contract in November.

The deal includes linking more than three million of the Argentine capital's population to the water supply system and four million to the waste-water system. Andrew Glasgow, managing director of North West Water International, said: "It is certainly one of the largest and most challenging projects in the industry." His company was named recently as the preferred tenderer for a major contract to design and operate a new water treatment plant in Melbourne, Australia.

Newmark still in red

THE loss of the UK agency for Swatch, the Swiss watch brand, helped to push Louis Newmark, the precision engineer and watch distributor, to a pre-tax loss of £980,000 (loss £1.07 million) in the year to April 4. Turnover declined to £24.8 million (£36.6 million). There was a loss per share of 29.9p (loss 34.8p). There is no dividend (nil). The results include Swatch sales of £1.36 million compared with £3.21 million. Newmark lost the agency, which accounted for the largest share of profits from watch distribution, in June 1991. The second half was affected by poor sales of capital goods items, in particular gauges and access control systems.

Newmarket loss grows

NEWMARKET Venture Capital, an investor in unquoted companies, saw pre-tax losses deepen from £421,000 to £1.04 million in the six months to end-June. Total net asset value fell from £21.6 million (60p a share) to £20 million (56p a share). A gain in NAV of £400,000 from an investment in British Bio-technology was more than offset by a weakness in the share price of some American investments. A 9 per cent drop in the value of the dollar against sterling accounted for a reduction of £600,000 in NAV. The assignment of a property lease and the costs of relocating to short-term accommodation reduced NAV by £800,000.

Setback at Crossroads

CROSSROADS Oil is still aiming to get back to the dividend despite having to pass the final again. Pre-tax profit in the year to the end of March slipped from £372,049 to £283,084. Turnover fell from £1.05 million to £791,690, while the interest bill was £75,138, compared with £13,055 received in the previous 12 months. The company said an increasing number of opportunities were becoming available for niche players in North America. Dividend payments would begin as soon as the level of cash flow permitted a prudent balance between capital needs and shareholders' expectations.

Fairfax chief named

STEPHEN Mulholland, head of South Africa's Times Media Ltd, has been appointed chief executive and managing director of John Fairfax, the Australian publishing group. Mr Mulholland, 56, who was born in Britain, will take up his position next month. The announcement was made by Sir Zelman Cowen, who became chairman of Fairfax when Conrad Black's Tourang consortium won control of the group last December, a year after it went into receivership.

Metal Bulletin up

METAL Bulletin, the specialist publisher and conference organiser, lifted pre-tax profits to £711,600 (£5.8 million) in the six months to end-June on turnover of £5.8 million (£5.4 million). Earnings per share were 5.1p (4.2p). There is an interim dividend of 2.7p (2.4p) a share. Increased contributions from newsletters, conferences and research services made up for a fall in advertising revenue. An extraordinary charge of £54,600 represents the cost of moving from the unlisted securities market to a full listing in July.

NatWest expands

NATIONAL Westminster has expanded its operations in Italy with the acquisition of Continental Bank's branch in Milan for an undisclosed sum. The acquisition is NatWest's first expansion into the Italian corporate banking market. The new branch will offer treasury, risk management and capital markets services as well as mainstream corporate banking. The deal still depends on approval from the Bank of Italy, and the branch will continue to operate as Continental until that is completed.

Crown Eyeglass rises

THE loss of a sales contract in Sweden had no impact on results from Crown Eyeglass, the Blackburn-based spectacle maker and distributor, which reported pre-tax profits of £451,000 (£251,000) in the year to end-March. The profit figure was struck after the deduction of a £66,000 "golden handshake" for Harold Stonefield who retired as purchasing director in March. Turnover increased to £3.99 million (£3.4 million). Earnings per share were 19.4p (11.2p). A final dividend of 4p (3.5p) a share makes a total of 6p (3.5p).

Armitage advances

PRESSURE on sales and margins of the group's main profit producing division sent operating profit Armitage Brothers back to £93,000 from £1.06 million in the year to end-May. But a lower interest bill allowed Armitage to increase pre-tax profits from £708,000 to £851,000, and a 3.4p final dividend makes a total up from 5.7p to 6.0p. Robert Armitage, the chairman, said sales levels generally continued to disappoint but indications were encouraging as to the level of Christmas trade.

Boost likely for Restart scheme

BY ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

GOVERNMENT schemes to get the jobless into work are likely to be given fresh impetus after an independent study showed intervention by the employment service is effective in cutting the number of long-term unemployed.

Gillian Shephard, the employment secretary, has already made it clear she wants to stem the steep rise in the number of long-term jobless caused by the recession.

The study by the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) for the employment service examined the impact of the government's Restart scheme.

Under the programme, launched five years ago, unemployed people are called for an interview at their local JobCentre after they have been claiming benefit for six months, and every six months thereafter. Staff provide counselling on job seeking and, where appropriate, offer access to training schemes or other government programmes.

The PSI concluded that people who had Restart interviews subsequently became unemployed again. According to the PSI: "The overall effects of Restart were limited by the short periods for which many jobs last on the less-skilled side of the jobs market.

"At least 40 per cent of all unemployed people who got jobs were out of them again within a year."

Restart, which was extended nationwide in 1987 after a pilot programme in 1986, cost the employment department £40 million to run in the year to end-March. Last year, 2.5 million people who had been without work for more than six months were given interviews.

Job seekers ill-suited for interviews

BY RODNEY HOBSON

JOB hunters are abandoning the suit and tie dressing in outrageous clothes in order to stand out from the other candidates.

One young hopeful sped into the interview room on a skateboard. Another candidate, determined to show the prospective employer how desperately he needed the job, had large holes in his shoes.

Jeff Grout, managing director of Robert Half, the financial recruitment specialist, said: "Many interview candidates are abandoning the conservative suit and sensible shoes for a look that is bound to get them noticed — but for the wrong reasons."

"Examples of odd interview attire offered by managers taking part in a survey we conducted varied from the merely inappropriate to the provocative, and even the revolting: pony

tails, sandals, shorts, bright yellow suits and pink corduroys were listed. And that was just the men."

Other male candidates made their mark at important interviews by turning up in a boiler suit, baseball boots or different coloured socks.

Another candidate tried to unsettle the interviewer by refusing to take off his overcoat although it was a sweltering hot day and the interview room was warm.

One extremely thin candidate who did manage to turn up in a suit had apparently borrowed it from a friend several sizes larger.

While the men tended to be unconventional or just plain scruffy, the women dressed to kill. Seductive attire reported in the survey included low-cut dresses, see-through blouses and party dresses.

One woman showed how much she felt at home in the office by finishing off her interview attire with a rather delightful pair of gold slippers. Laddered tights.

loud and revolting ties, sunglasses and tattoos were cited as pet hates on the interview circuit.

Mr Grout said: "To increase your chances of getting a job at the interview stage, you need to play the interview game and ensure that you are appropriately dressed for the profession and the position."

"In creative environments such as advertising, people can get away with more unconventional dress than within, say, accountancy. However, as the decision to hire is made within the first five minutes of the meeting, possibly before the candidate has spoken, dress and personal presentation are the key to the decision-making process."

"You are likely to score more points in that crucial time by looking smart and professional rather than trying to stand out from the crowd with a style of dress that may be alien and ridiculous to the interviewer."

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Fall in demand for diamonds threatens De Beers payout

By COLIN CAMPBELL, MINING CORRESPONDENT

FOR the second time in a decade, and only the third time in 48 years, the unthinkable is about to happen: De Beers is poised to cut its first full dividend.

The diamond group yesterday gave a warning that demand for rough stones sold through its Central Selling Organisation marketing arm is faltering because of depressed world economic conditions, and that smuggling of rough diamonds out of Angola has intensified.

De Beers, in a move that emphasises the seriousness of its difficulties, is invoking the deferred purchases clauses in its contracts with its suppliers. From September, the CSO will take 25 per cent less diamonds than it would otherwise have bought. That last happened in 1981.

De Beers units (shares) —

which link, as one, the South African and non-South African companies — fell in London, Johannesburg and New York, closing almost £1 lower at 950p, the first fall below the £10 a share level in nearly two years.

Combined attributable earnings in the six months to end-June fell from \$446 million to \$330 million, and at the equity-accounted level, earnings were down from \$586 million at \$460 million.

The interim dividend is effectively maintained at 25.1 cents a share, but the board says "the current outlook would indicate a significant reduction in the final dividends".

The incidence of weak economies and Angolan smuggling has led De Beers to "reassess the outlook for the immediate future". Sales of

rough diamonds that were \$1.787 billion in the first half of 1992 are likely to fall sharply in the second half.

They were \$2.084 billion in the first half of 1991 and \$1.843 billion in the second half.

Japanese and American retail demand, accounting for roughly 60 per cent of total worldwide retail sales, is soft, despite an intensified advertising and marketing campaign launched by De Beers earlier this year. The group's marketing spend in 1992 is budgeted at \$164 million.

De Beers declined to detail

how much it has spent on buying in smuggled rough diamonds known to have come from Angola, but the total incidence of smuggling is estimated at between \$400 million and \$500 million.

It says the increase in the supply of illicit diamonds from Angola has been "dramatic", and group officials have continued to press the Angolan authorities to halt the trade.

The World Bank and other agencies giving financial assistance to Angola, in the hope of

attracting foreign capital and industries, are also known to be concerned.

There is no indication of De Beers' current stockpile, which it finances. At the end of 1991, the stockpile stood at \$3.03 billion compared with \$2.68 billion at the end of 1990. De Beers has always emphasised its financial strength in being able to fund this stockpile.

However, after weaker interim profits, and given the uncertain demand outlook, De Beers says the overall result "is likely to be a greater percentage reduction in the full year's combined profits than that recorded in the first half".

De Beers first cut a dividend in 1944 because of the second world war. In March 1982, De Beers again cut its dividend, at that time by half. The investment ramifications of its 1982 action lasted for the rest of the Eighties.

The City fears that group attributable profits could fall 19 per cent this year from \$763 million to \$615 million, and, at the equity-accounted level, that profits could fall 15 per cent from \$1.078 billion to \$915 million. The decision on the final dividend will be taken in March, but yesterday's warning is clear.

Administrators sell PPI Del Monte

By ANGELA MACKAY

POLY Peck International's administrators have sold Del Monte Fresh Produce, the group's prime asset, to a Mexican syndicate led by Grupo Cabral.

Both parties refused to confirm the sale price, but it is believed to be about \$495 million — \$380 million less than Asil Nadir, Poly Peck's founder and former chairman, paid for the company almost three years ago.

Coopers & Lybrand, the administrators appointed in October 1990, had been hampered in attempts to seal a quick sale by low fresh fruit prices and worldwide recession. Michael Jordan and Richard Stone, the administrators, had considered floated the fresh fruit operations.

Brian Haycox, chief executive officer of PPI Del Monte, said: "The transaction will provide Del Monte brand fresh produce operations with additional capital and the long-term support that we have been looking for."

About \$270 million of the

sale price will be used to pay down PPI Del Monte's bank debt with the balance going to

PPI Holdings BV, which will

First fall since issue for Wellcome shares

By MARTIN WALLER

SHARES in Wellcome, the pharmaceuticals group whose share sale raised £2.2 billion in July, fell sharply for the first time since the issue after the stabilisation mechanism put in place to support them was unexpectedly scaled back.

Wellcome shares lost 18p to 782p after Robert Fleming, the global co-ordinator to the issue, reduced the price at

meanwhile, the group's order book, with \$12 billion worth of aircraft due for delivery between now and 2000 and another \$9 billion on option, was being reviewed in consultation with the aerospace manufacturers.

The group, based in the Republic of Ireland, reported first-quarter to end-June net profits of \$49.1 million compared with \$61.3 million and conceded that further profits growth would be constrained until fundraising was achieved. The first-quarter figure excluded the cost of withdrawing from the flotation, estimated to be about \$20 million, which will be charged in the accounts for the year.

Gibbs: Trust chairman

Lawyers' assets are frozen

From PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK

ONE of the two powerful Washington lawyers charged with taking \$40 million in bribes from the collapsed Bank of Credit and Commerce International unwittingly bounced a cheque to the man who cuts his grass because New York authorities have frozen his assets.

Robert Bennett, the lawyer for defendants Clark Clifford and Robert Altman, claimed the freeze had left them with no money to pay routine bills. Both Mr Clifford, 85 and an adviser to American presidents since the 1940s, and Mr Altman, 45, his protégé, have denied all charges against them.

In what lawyers say is a highly unusual move, Mr Bennett issued a formal statement claiming: "The [Manhattan] District Attorney's

Office does not simply want to prosecute Messrs Clifford and Altman, it wants to destroy them..." by freezing their personal assets, including their current and savings accounts.

"Doctors' bills and attorney fees cannot be paid," the statement said. "They can't even pay their routine living expenses."

Mr Bennett said the freeze order was made without warning and one of the two men bounced a cheque to the man who cuts his grass. However, a spokesman for the Manhattan Attorney's Office said that it was inaccurate to say all assets had been frozen. He said provisions had been made to provide for Mr Clifford, Mr Altman and their families.

He said freezing of assets



Breakthrough: Nelson Robertson said the improvement reflected management action rather than better underlying conditions

General Accident shrinks first-half loss to £21m

By JONATHAN PRYNN
INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

GENERAL Accident, the composite insurance group based in Perth, has reported its first quarterly profit for two years and has sharply reduced its loss for the first six months of the year.

The results mark a breakthrough for the battered UK insurance sector, which has been devastated by a long succession of big claims payouts that have occurred at a time of highly competitive premium rates. GA's pre-

tax loss for the six months to the end of June was reduced from £105.2 million to £21.2 million, better than most analysts' expectations. The group made a pre-tax profit of £9.5 million (loss of £50.5 million) in the second quarter. The interim dividend is held at 9.7p.

Nelson Robertson, chief general manager, said the results reflected action on the part of the management rather than any real improvement in underlying conditions. He said: "We're not getting carried away just

because we have had one quarter's profit."

General premium income rose 5 per cent to £1.69 billion, partly because of an American acquisition and partly because of increased premium rates. The improvement in the profit performance came largely in the UK, despite a £6 million claim for the cost of April's IRA bombs. The loss on domestic mortgage indemnity (DMI) business fell from £22.4 million to £17 million. GA has only 4 per cent of the UK's DMI market and has not been

Tempus, page 18



General Accident

RECOVERY CONTINUES

6-MONTHS' RESULTS

	6 Months to 30.6.92 Estimated £m	6 Months to 30.6.91 Estimated £m
General Premiums	1,690.9	1,617.5
Life Premiums	357.0	241.1
Net Investment Income	190.4	176.1
Underwriting Loss	(216.3)	(288.9)
Loss before Taxation	(21.2)	(105.2)
Loss attributable to Shareholders	(19.7)	(94.8)
Earnings per share	(4.5p)	(21.9p)
Dividend per share	9.7p	9.7p

- Pre-tax loss at the half-year of £21.2m represents an improvement of £84.0m.
- Second quarter pre-tax profit of £9.5m as trend of quarterly improvements continues.
- UK underwriting losses further reduced as benefits of rating action and cost control show through.
- US result satisfactory in a difficult market.
- Good results in Canada and the Pacific.
- Life operations make strong progress.
- Net investment income increases by 7.9%.
- Proposed creation of preference shares.

Nelson Robertson, Chief Executive, commented: "Our second quarter profit confirms that the remedial action we have taken is proving effective."

General Accident plc

General Accident plc, World Headquarters: Pitheavlis, Perth, Scotland PH2 0NH

BT's price cap is a tight fit

BT has given its grudging acceptance to the toughest regulatory regime in Europe. Its price-capping formula of RPI minus 7½ per cent is more restrictive than ever that in force in high-inflation Italy and looks punitive in comparison with the RPI minus 3 per cent enforced on the French telecommunications network. BT huffed and puffed but in the final analysis preferred to live with the new regime demanded by Ofel, its regulator, rather than submit to the protracted agonies of a full-blown investigation by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. This can only be taken to imply that BT believes it can live with Ofel's demands and still meet the company's obligations to customers and shareholders. Otherwise the board would have been duty bound to insist on a visit to the MMC.

There is, however, a substantial point in BT's objection that Ofel's new price cap marks a shift towards more interventionist regulation. BT might have added, but did not, that had the BT prospectus mentioned such draconian measures, the initial and subsequent government offer of shares in the company might have been regarded in a different light. What BT and its long-term investors need now arises from the uncertainty created by this turn of the regulatory screw. It is a government declaration of its longer-term objectives in diverting market share away from BT. There is general acceptance that creating a private sector monopoly out of a state-owned one was not an ideal route to privatisation. But will the regulator ease up when BT's market share reaches 80 per cent, or 50 per cent, or even less? BT's acquiescence yesterday to a 4 year price cap implies that there is no great urgency. But the question has to be addressed in due course.

For the moment though, BT shareholders can look forward with some confidence to the future. The company has strong cash flow and thus dividend paying capacity plus great scope for further cost cutting.

Policy dilemma

The slowest rise in factory gate prices for a generation certainly offers a sign, if yet another were needed, that the economy is deep in recession. Neither this nor the CBI's latest data on pay settlements prove that cost inflation has been eliminated. Fuel and raw material prices have mostly been falling, on an annual basis, since April 1990. Adding this back, producer prices would have risen over the past year at a similar rate to retail prices, which are expected to show inflation of about 4.1 per cent when the next figures are released on Friday. Unit labour costs in manufacturing have still been rising through recession.

The CBI and its allies are surely right, however, to argue that the recession has done all it can to curb cost inflation. It is, therefore, pointless to continue to focus policy on anti-inflationary measures, which will merely squeeze profits and investment. This is a good-debating point. Few seriously believe, however, that the government's policy has reducing inflation as its goal. It is the prisoner of decisions taken when sterling was put into the European exchange-rate mechanism in 1990, when a move intended to introduce currency stability was taken as a short-term deflationary measure, since set in concrete by pressures on the unified German economy.

Sadly, the CBI's members have yet to demonstrate that the economy could cope with anything better than the painfully slow recovery, from a lower base, that can now be expected. There is little sign that Britain can become so competitive that its economy can afford to grow noticeably faster than its rivals. The transfer of jobs from Britain to the continent must, therefore, be regarded as permanent.

Lindsay Cook explains why thousands of card users have experienced problems in shops, restaurants and hotels in the past few weeks

There is one thing worse than being overcharged for most credit and charge card customers and that is being told their credit limit has run out when they know that they have hundreds if not thousands of pounds

This uncomfortable experience has been happening to credit and charge card holders since July 17. That was when the massed cardholders of National Westminster, Midland, Lloyds, Royal Bank of Scotland and some smaller card issuers were transferred from one computer system to another.

The ensuing problems have caused red faces among computer specialists and great embarrassment for customers when their preferred card has been turned down at the end of a meal or in a smart shop. No authorisation — on sale.

Thousands more have been charged too much in interest and other charges or have found difficulty in tracing purchases on statements because the wrong dates have been given.

National Westminster, the most seriously-affected card provider, has already written to its 250,000 gold card customers telling them that they may have been overcharged and plans to include a statement with August bills of ordinary credit cards saying that transactions dates may have gone awry. Other card issuers have also experienced up to 100 problems each.

These are the result of the accounts and customer details of 10 million customers being transferred from an old and cumbersome computer system to a new one developed and used in America.

The problems are now over but it will take the credit card industry some time to settle jangling nerves of customers whose cards have been gobbed up by machines or whose creditworthiness has been called into question by Saturday staff in their favourite shop.

The new First Data Resources software is intended to give customers more choice and better information. In addition, it has the virtue of the banks of being cheaper and it frees up internal computer time for more lucrative business.

The authorisation problems happened in three main ways. On the first weekend, the First Data Resources system did not have sufficient capacity to deal with the amount of business generated by 14 million credit card users.

People who were on holiday abroad or others spending in the local high street found that their cards were refused because the retailer could not get an answer from the card issuer's authorisation telephone



Inflexible friend: many cardholders were embarrassed to be told that their credit limit had run out

number. The traders could not risk sanctioning large transactions, such as hotel bills, without authorisation in case the card was stolen. Without an authorisation number, it is the retailer who foots the bill, not the credit card company.

Second, problems occurred over a longer period to only one or two of the banks using the new software. The system failed to match authorisations with purchases. This means that customers reached their credit limit doubly fast.

When an authorisation is given, this is deducted from the money available on the account.

Then when the actual transaction reaches the account either electronically or by paper voucher the computer should match the purchase and the authorisation and identify them as the same event. The authorisation and transaction were not always matched with the new system, causing problems for big spenders and those cardholders running close to the credit limit on their card.

Third, some customers who pay by direct debit found that the money was not taken from their bank account and, therefore, they went over their

credit limit when they continued spending. The problems were also exacerbated by the fact that banks are using to fight fraud. This exceeded £160 million last year. Floor limits in shops therefore, have been universally lowered.

Stores that used to be able to go ahead with credit card transactions without authorisation for purchases of up to say £150 might now have to telephone to seek authorisation for

sources and, from his experience, he expects that probably 10,000 out of the 14 million customers who were transferred had problems of some kind.

Most of these would have been charges caused by a processing backlog. This meant that cheques arrived with the credit card companies on time but did not reach the account and interest was charged. In the case of gold charge cards which should be paid in full at the end of the month, a late payment charge might also be levied.

As early as February, the banks began preparing for the changeover. With an average of 2.07 million credit card transactions a day, they knew there was plenty of scope for errors. First in the firing line at Lloyds were 200 staff whose cards were moved in May.

This threw up a few problems, mainly with the cardholder's address, which were not being properly transferred. Then in June, 40,000 customers whose cards were due for renewal were moved over to the new system. They were not told that they were a pilot scheme for the 2 million plus other Lloyds card users and there

were no difficulties so they will never know.

Since the changeover, about 40 Lloyds gold card users have had too much taken from their bank accounts in the form of direct debits. The glitch was discovered the next day and the money restored. All the customers were sent letters of apology.

Lloyd's is set to announce the improvements to their card services but feels that the publicity about problems at National Westminster and other banks is overshadowing the benefits.

Gold card holders will be able to pay their accounts in full by direct debit. Lloyds Access and Visa credit cards will be able to pay the minimum due by direct debit. Gold card customers will be able to choose a statement date.

All customers will also be able to make enquiries more easily as account details will be able to be called up on screen by Lloyds' staff for the first time.

Midland has also had some minor problems. "It does not appear to be very widespread and it involves occasional delays in credits reaching the accounts. Where we have identified it we have sent a letter to the customer," the bank said.

The Royal Bank of Scotland puts the total number of its errors at about 100.

At Barclays, which has 8.7 million cards, there have been no problems because the bank has always undertaken its own processing. The bank, which has handled 153 million credit card transactions involving £6 billion of turnover so far this year, is also spending £17 million on improving its computer technology this year.

It introduced a new system to speed up the processing of queries at the beginning of the year. This allows customer service staff not only to look up the details of an account but also to authorise changes to it immediately. In this way, a new credit limit can be granted immediately.

Bob Potts, managing director, Barclaycard, said: "It cuts down on errors because one person deals with it immediately and because it is highly automated."

The telephones have also been improved so that a screen tells the customer services department how many calls are waiting. Staff can be transferred to clear any backlog.

Liz Phillips, director of the Credit Card Research Group, said: "All credit card customers should check their statements. The testing problems did not affect all the credit card issuers and now appears to be historical. Those customers who were charged wrongly have been contacted."

The disastrous publicity for credit cards could not have come at a worse time for the industry. The number of cardholders is falling, as is the amount they are spending, yet bad debts are increasing. Banks are now writing off £100 for every £100 spent on credit cards.

A business that was hugely profitable in the seventies and early eighties is now only covering its increasing costs because the banks have widened their margins.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Romania bound

SITTING in his Redcliffe Square apartment, surrounded by 1,000 tins of baked beans — "Andy Warhol would feel completely at home here," he says — Andrew Christensen, who resigned as a private client director of James Capel last month, is now anxious to scotch rumours that he is about to join the Hare Krishna religious sect. Turning his back on a basic salary of £60,000 a year, Christensen is, he says, about to set off in a truck bound for Romania where he will spend up to three months helping to build an orphanage. "I have been hugely well remunerated for the past few years, financially. I'm quite secure now, and I have decided that the time has come to do something more constructive with my life," Christensen, 34, and a bachelor, explains. "But I'm now hearing back from some of my friends in the City that James Capel thinks I have gone off my rocker and that I'm joining Hare Krishna. It's completely untrue and since I might want to return to the City when I get back, it's important that I put the record straight." Following these assurances, Christensen is hopeful that former colleagues and clients might now see fit to donate yet more tins of baked beans, toys or any other merchandise appropriate to his mission to Romania. "I might as well fill up the truck I'll be travelling in and I will be leaving at the end of this month," Christensen says optimistically.



Cash from crisis

COMMERCIAL Union, the insurance group, has found a way of making money out of a crisis. Its risk management arm is holding a conference on how businesses can cope if they suddenly lose their headquarters. Commercial Union should know how to do this because its building in the City was devastated by the IRA bomb in April. It is charging £190 a head for senior managers of other companies to attend the Sedgwick Centre at Aldgate on September 8 to learn, from Commercial Union's experience, how to cope. Among other topics included in the conference — and one which, one trusts, has not similarly afflicted Commercial Union — will be a session on how to handle journalists who have discovered that a top executive has been involved in a scandal.

Radio control

FANS of *The Archers*, the long-running radio saga of a

Extend tax breaks to education and health care

From Mr Ronald Forrest, Sir, Mr Douglas McLean in business letters (August 5) states that "the urgent task for government must be to encourage those who are able and willing to do so to reduce their dependency on the state".

This is surely a basic Conservative principle but one that the government now seems to be doing little to implement.

There are two obvious fields in which the government could begin as early as the next

month expenditure. There should be a programme to phase in fiscal encouragement of self sufficiency by extending the tax allowance for private medical insurance now given only to persons over 60 and by making fees for private education at least in part tax deductible.

Yours faithfully,
RONALD FORREST,
Delyn,
Castell Morris,
Pembroke, Pembrokeshire.

In effect, by using private health care or the private education system one is at present obliged to pay twice for these services, so instead of there being an incentive to be independent of the state there is, on the contrary, a penalty for helping to reduce govern-

Cutting savings rates prolongs recession

From Mrs Joan Seed, Sir. As a widowed pensioner I agree wholeheartedly with the views of Valerie Goldberg (Business Letters, *The Times*, August 6).

After paying ever-increasing basic living costs for gas, electricity, telephone, water, and so on, from an annually decreasing income, there is little, if anything, left over to spend in helping the economy to recover from the present recession.

Long delay in realising HK investments

From J.B.W. Turner, Sir. My uncle died a few months ago, and I am one of the executors of his estate, which consisted almost entirely of his house, furniture, etc., and investments.

All the investments were quoted on the Stock Exchange and they have all been informed by a supervisor that the exact wording on the back of its service contract was 48 "working hours" — i.e. up to ten days, if reported on a Saturday, and not 48 hours as in two days.

The grant will have to be released and this will take a further six to nine months! The total process will take, therefore, ten to fifteen months!

Of the shares already realised, several were in foreign companies. How is it that there can be such an unreasonable delay in dealing with shares in companies in a British colony?

Perhaps the matter will be settled before Hong Kong reverts to China! Yours faithfully,
J.B.W. TURNER,
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34	Charter Com	Industrial	
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Lenders' optimism wanes

Hard as they look, lenders to the property market cannot see recovery in sight, and many now expect either no change or a decline in the market for at least another year. This assessment emerges from the latest property lending confidence barometer compiled by Chesterton Financial and the magazine *Chartered Surveyor Weekly* and provides further evidence that an end to recession is still some way off.

The most positive consensus is that the market is bumping along the bottom, but pessimists outnumber optimists among the 58 banks and financial institutions questioned in July. Previous optimism about recovery has waned and fewer than half (48 per cent) now expect an improvement in the market in the next 12 months, down from 55 per cent in January and 70 per cent a year ago. The number believing the market would worsen remained static at 5 per cent, with the balance (47 per cent) indicating that they expected no change.

In the shorter term 69 per cent of the respondents predict no change in the market in the next six months, compared with 14 per cent who anticipate some improvement.

The survey provides a picture of the uncertainty facing struggling property companies, with 69 per cent of the lending institutions expecting the upward trend in receiverships to continue over the

next six months. In the longer term, the institutions are generally more optimistic. Just under one third (29 per cent) believe the rate of receiverships will increase over the next 12 months compared with half in January, while 16 per cent anticipate a decrease. "If these forecasts are correct, the coming six months will prove a critical period for unhealthy property companies," the report says.

The survey indicates greater acceptance by lenders that there is no short-term solution to the property market's slump. Debt-to-equity swaps are increasing as a method of coping with difficult loans, allowing the lender more control of the level of bad debt provisions by taking an equity share.

Since January the average bad debt provision has increased dramatically, from nearly 3 per cent to 7.5 per cent of the total property loan book.

Over the next six months, 69 per cent of lenders foresee a further rise in bad debt provision and only 5 per cent anticipate a fall, an increase in the proportion of pessimists from 58 per cent in January to 64 per cent.

In response to market conditions, lenders have had to revise their locational preferences for property lending. The South-East has fallen further out of favour since January

when it was second in the regional table to the West Midlands. It now occupies fourth place behind the West Midlands, the North-West and the East Midlands.

The West Midlands has consolidated its position as the most favoured lending location, with over one third of the respondents

of the impact that over-supply has had on lenders' perceptions. Mike Riley, managing director of Chesterton Financial, said that the lenders' lack of confidence made it difficult to forecast when the property market was likely to improve. "More specifically, lenders at long last appear to acknowledge that, compared to the South-East, the Midlands and the North-West have generally been less affected by the collapse in property market values and are better placed to benefit from any recovery."

He regarded the rise in bad debt provisions as a positive sign, demonstrating that lenders had come to terms with the size of the problem.

"More significantly their ability to write off bad debts is important as it helps to speed up recovery in the property sector, enabling property to be sold at realistic prices and some activity to begin. It also allows lenders to return to their usual business of lending money rather than fire-fighting. A healthy banking industry is good news for the property market."

The extent of the slump in the property market is shown by Debenham Tewson Research, the property consultants, in its report *Money into Property* that highlights the continuing contraction of funds being put into commercial

property from a peak of £14 billion in 1989 to a present level of less than £4 billion.

The late 1980s surge in market liquidity was strongly pushed by bank lending which has now been replaced by net repayments. The report suggests that while institutional equity investment is rising the banks will continue a policy of repayment and refinancing of existing debt for some time to come. Low inflation, high real interest rates and the lack of economic growth will, in the short term, inevitably influence investment selection and lending criteria.

A healthy recovery in net investment by the institutions was recorded in 1991 as they accounted for £2 billion of net property investment. This trend continued in the first half of 1992, due in part to "bargain hunting" by fund managers. Sales by the institutions have been cut substantially over the past two years in response to the fall in property values and an unwillingness to dispose of property at depressed prices. This may well mean that in the short term net institutional property investment continues its buoyant trend. Debenham Tewson suggests.

Although purchases of UK property by overseas investors are at a lower level than in the 1988-90 period, there has been a significant improvement in demand among buyers from mainland Europe.

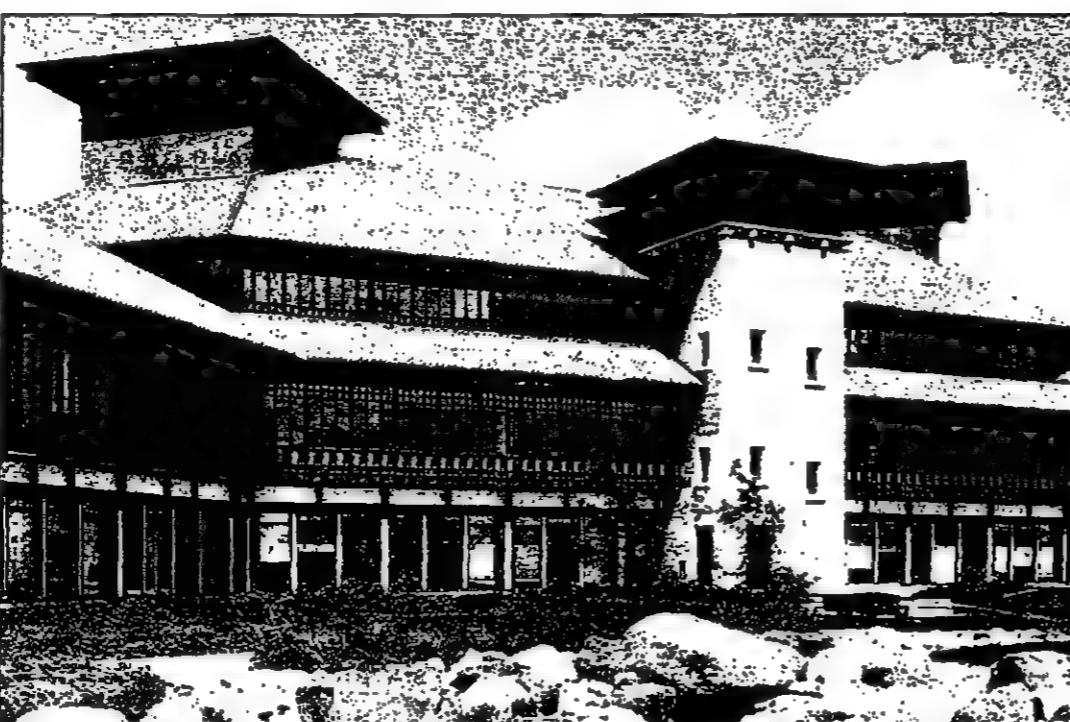
Discover the joys of being a freeholder

Some companies will see the sense in casting off the shackles of a lease

Pearl Assurance has opened its new £100 million headquarters in Peterborough after moving from its long-time offices in Holborn, central London. The 400,000 sq ft development was built by Wimpey Construction's Midland region. Almost a third of the cost went into technology and services. Christopher Warman writes.

The move is in line with the latest advice from the property consultancy St Quintin: buy your freehold. Such advice might seem odd at a time when office rental levels have plummeted to tilt the balance firmly from landlord to tenants, giving them bargains both in rents and leases, but Michael Brodman, of St Quintin Property Finance and Bruce Hibbert of St Quintin business space department believe their reasoning is sound.

In their report, they say that escalating rents in the mid-1980s and a relatively lax planning environment spawned a commercial building surge, as it became highly profitable to build, and to a high



Freehold asset: Pearl Assurance's new £100 million headquarters in Peterborough

specification. "So we now have a vast number of beautiful buildings at rock bottom prices," they say. Although supply and demand relationships vary throughout the UK, capital values have lost at least 20 per cent and in a few cases up to 50 per cent in the past four years. A building of 50,000 square

feet which then cost £16 million might cost only £8 million today.

The authors question, however, the likelihood of property accelerating in value. "It is unlikely that commercial property will rise to the dizzy heights of the late 1980s, but given steady economic growth in

buying the freehold now could mean a substantial reduction in future overheads."

Owning the freehold of a property also means that the occupier can invest in the property, whether it is fitting out a kitchen or building specialist facilities such as a laboratory. While such additions have a clear benefit for the freehold occupier, they may not have for the leaseholder. Leases often include reinstatement clauses, involving the occupier in the costly restoration of the building to its original state.

Some companies may feel it is inappropriate to tie up so much capital in bricks and mortar, but if companies are worried about future liquidity difficulties, buying now may create future opportunities to reap the rewards of capital gains through sale and leaseback, and provide a substantial asset in the balance sheet, the St Quintin report says.

Others may feel that the time is not right because the market could fall further. The St Quintin team believes it is unlikely to drop much and that within five years rental levels and capital values will have made a respectable come-back. "Purchase is not a universal panacea. But for those companies on a steady growth path, who are nearing the end of their lease term and who know where they want to be located in the medium term, freehold purchase could make a lot of sense," the report says.



The newly-completed offices at St John's Place, High Wycombe

Victorian splendour

ST JOHN'S Place, High Wycombe, the town centre's only large new office scheme, has been completed by the developer Glaston Spen Hill. The building, in a conservation area, is on the site of the old grammar school and retains its Victorian facade. The building provides about 25,500 sq ft of air-conditioned offices and is available in units from 9,000 sq ft. A rent of about £24 a sq ft is being sought by joint agents Debenham Tewson & Chinnock & Co. and Brian Cooper & Co.

Butlers Wharf deal

HACKETT, the men's outfitter and a subsidiary of Dunhill Holdings, has taken space at the newly completed redevelopment by the Cadogan Estate of 136-140 Sloane Street, central London. The scheme involved the refurbishment of the Grade II listed No 139 while the rest were redeveloped behind retained facades. Hackett has taken a 20-year lease at £235,000 a year on 5,600 sq ft, which is being fitted out to open in the autumn as its London flagship store. Part of the scheme has been pre-let to agent Savills.

Museum signs up

CENTRAL London's first motor museum since the nineteenth century will be housed at Trafalgar Place, a development off Trafalgar Square, by the Swedish group Skandia. Motor Car Museum Ltd has agreed to take 25,000 sq ft on the lower three floors of the building in Pall Mall East, at close to the asking rent of £29.50 a sq ft. The 15-year lease has an 18-month rent-free period. The museum will have a permanent exhibition of 60 vintage, classic and racing cars. A planning application has been submitted to Westminster council for a change of use, and the museum is expected to open next spring. C. W.

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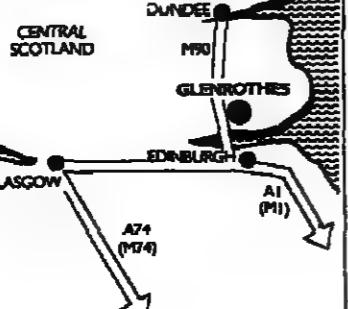
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Norwich City ready to part with Fleck

Chelsea beat rivals in race to sign influential Harford

By LOUISE TAYLOR

CHELSEA yesterday fended off competition from Everton and Coventry City to recruit Mick Harford for £300,000 from Luton Town. It may seem a large sum to invest in a 33-year-old, but Harford, a former England centre forward, was probably Luton's most influential player last season.

On a busy day in the transfer market for Chelsea, the club's attack was further strengthened by the acquisition of John Spencer, a Scottish Under-21 international, for £450,000 from Rangers.

The double signing signified that there was no future for Johnny Ekström at Stamford Bridge. The Swedish international forward has been on loan at Chelsea with a view to a possible £1 million move from IFK Gothenburg, but Ekström failed to impress in an exhibition at Bristol City last Saturday and Gothenburg yesterday confirmed that he will be returning to Sweden.

Mike Walker, the Norwich City manager, has said that he expects Robert Fleck, his Scottish forward, to leave Carrow Road by the weekend. Norwich want £2.5 million for

Fleck, who has inspired interest from Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur.

Another striker, Dean Holdsworth, who has spent the summer on loan at Wimbleton from Bradford, yesterday made his status at Selhurst Park permanent, thanks to a £720,000 transfer, a record for the west London club. The deal also involved Detsi Kruszynski and Mickey Bennett moving in the opposite direction.

Notts County have rejected two £2.5 million offers for Craig Short, their impressive central defender, from Blackpool, Rovers and Derby County. Short, 24, still has two years of his present contract at Meadow Lane outstanding and Derek Pavis, the Notts County chairman, yesterday said: "He is seeing that contract out." A £3 million offer, however, might be viewed in a different light by Notts County who, only a few weeks ago, were reported to be wanting £1 million in return to parting with Short.

The Nottingham club did sign a new defender yesterday, Meineart Dijkstra, from Willem II Tilburg of Holland, for an undisclosed fee.

Pendry pleads for clubs

AS CHARLTON Athletic, Maidstone United, Oxford United and a host of other football clubs will testify, grandios plans for new purpose-built stadia often go no further than the offices of local authority planning departments (Louise Taylor writes). With this in mind, Tom Pendry, chairman of the parliamentary all-party football committee, is to lead a delegation to meet David Mellor, the secretary of state for national heritage, to urge the government to help clubs being refused such planning permission.

Bruce Grobbelaar will decide today whether to play for Liverpool in a Premier League fixture at Nottingham Forest on Sunday or fly to Harare to keep goal for Zimbabwe in an international against South Africa. Should Grobbelaar fly to Africa, David James, Liverpool's summer signing from Watford, will start the season in goal.

Liverpool were ordered to pay an initial £1 million for James by a tribunal yesterday with, depending on appearances, a further £300,000 to follow.

Manchester City have offered Wimbleton £1.5 million for Terry Phelan, the full back, but the London club is likely to hold out for £2 million.

Scandri, 25, is now based in Florence and rides for the American Motorola team. "I've never won a big stage race, this would be a good one

to start with," Scandri said. He has two stage wins in the Giro d'Italia to his credit. He is working his way back to fitness after a stomach upset forced him to pull out of the Tour de France.

The action came in the final ten miles of the 133-mile stage from Edinburgh through the Kielder Forest to Tyneside.

The field had stayed together until Swalwell Bank, a sharp climb on the outskirts of Gateshead, split the pack. Van Aert was first on to the 1.6-mile finishing circuit, chased hard by Scandri, Van der Poel and Heidi Imboden, Switzerland.

Van der Poel beat Scandri in a bonus sprint with a lap to go. But the Italian learnt from



Spin in the rain: the field in the Kellogg's Tour swishes along the A7 between Edinburgh and Galashiels

Scandri sprints to yellow jersey

By A CORRESPONDENT

MAX Scandri won the longest stage of this year's Kellogg's Tour of Britain at Gateshead yesterday to take the overall lead in the race. He has a three-second advantage over Jos van Aert, of Holland, with another Dutchman, Adri van der Poel, another seven seconds behind.

It was an Anglo-Italian success for Scandri who was born in Derby and lived in Bournemouth until he was six years old, when his parents moved to Los Angeles.

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Van der Poel beat Scandri in a bonus sprint with a lap to go. But the Italian learnt from

his defeat and made certain he was first out of the final bend and held off his challengers down straight.

Hendrik Redant, who started the day in the yellow jersey, led home the fourth group to finish and slipped to fourth place overall.

Brian Smith, the former British champion, celebrated the race's departure from his native Scotland by winning two Border country climbs counting towards the king of the mountains competition.

"I hadn't planned to go for the climber's prize but I decided a couple of sprints in the hills would raise my morale on a rainy day and now I'll try to defend my lead," he said.

RESULTS: Second stage (Edinburgh-Gateshead): 133 miles: 1, M. Scandri (Motorola), 1:57:59; 2, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:00; 3, H. Imboden (Swiss), 1:58:01; 4, J. Van Aert (PDM), 1:58:02; 5, J. Scandri (Tulip), 1:58:03; 6, E. Bouwman (Panasonic), 1:58:04; 7, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:05; 8, M. Scandri (Tulip), 1:58:06; 9, H. Imboden (Swiss), 1:58:07; 10, B. Smith (Motorola), 1:58:08; 11, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:09; 12, P. Campagni (Mercedes), 1:58:10; 13, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:11; 14, J. Scandri (Tulip), 1:58:12; 15, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:13; 16, S. Schenkel (Tulip), 1:58:14; 17, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:15; 18, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:16; 19, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:17; 20, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:18; 21, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:19; 22, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:20; 23, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:21; 24, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:22; 25, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:23; 26, A. Van der Poel (Tulip), 1:58:24; 27, A. 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WEDNESDAY AUGUST 12 1992

Premier League sides unsure of new law

Back-pass rule may not be the way forward

By STUART JONES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT



THE new law prohibiting goalkeepers from handling passes kicked deliberately in their direction has divided football into two schools of thought on the eve of the inaugural Premier League season.

Graham Kelly, the Football Association's chief executive, revealed yesterday that he had "a lot of reservations" and was convinced to vote for it at the meeting between the home countries and Fifa, football's world governing body, only after "a very long, exhaustive and exhausting debate".

The referees' committee of the FA had agreed with its Scottish and Northern Irish counterparts that the idea should be rejected at a meeting in Newport two months ago.

Kelly, after studying the analyses of an experiment conducted during a youth tournament in Portugal last year, felt that defenders would merely be encouraged to "hoof

the ball into the back of the stands" — which, ironically, could lead to further time being wasted — and that throw-ins would proliferate. He was persuaded to change his mind.

Significantly, the presidents of Fifa and Uefa, the game's European governing body, both of whom attended the meeting in Newport, expressed an eagerness to eliminate back-passes as a time-wasting tactic. Only with England's support was the law brought in but a loophole was exposed during pre-season games, particularly in Germany.

Inventive tricks, such as flicking the ball up and head-

ing it legitimately back to the goalkeeper, were used but such contrived practices have now been outlawed. The crucial word is "deliberately", which should simplify matters for referees, but their decisions are bound to provoke controversy, especially over the next few weeks.

David Elleray, the referee for the Charity Shield match between Leeds United and Liverpool last Saturday, feared that the occasion would be "dreadful because I might have to caution three or four players for ungentlemanly conduct". He said later: "Instead, the law was in part responsible for producing such an exciting game."

If players respond similarly to the spirit as well as to the letter of the law, the Premier League season promises a new beginning. Games should be more open and domestic defenders might be encouraged to be as constructive as those on the Continent.

Yet Gary Mabbutt, the captain of Tottenham Hotspur, is concerned that Andy Dibble, Manchester City's reserve goalkeeper who broke his leg in Ireland last week, will not be the last to be wounded. Indeed, he feels that managers are likely to include a goalkeeper among the three permitted substitutes.

"I think there could be a lot more broken legs among goalkeepers," he said. "It puts them at risk to oncoming forwards and I can foresee a lot of potentially serious injuries." He also thinks clubs who pursue the long-ball game, such as Sheffield United and Wimbledon, will be

the next month, £5 million is to be spent on an intensive media presentation.

A few years ago, the same sum might have been accepted by the clubs as their share for a whole season.

The return for the investment will be measured by the number of satellite dishes sold. Although BSkyB's representatives are not prepared to release precise figures, they suggested that 700,000 would not be an unrealistic figure.

Traditionally, sales start to rise at the end of the summer holidays in September.

Alan Sugar, a director of Tottenham Hotspur, is enjoying a boost in his business. Sugar is the owner of Amstrad, the principal manufacturer of satellite dishes, and is importing two plane loads of his product every week.

Ford plans to sponsor television coverage

By STUART JONES

FORD, the motor company recently rejected by the squabbling Premier League chairmen as a potential sponsor, is expected to be confirmed today as one of the two backers of BSkyB television's coverage of football over the next five seasons. The other sponsor in the deal is believed to be Courage, the brewing company.

The campaign, supported, ironically, by firms promoting, individually, drinking and driving, will open with Liverpool's game against Nottingham Forest at the City Ground on Sunday.

It will feature 60 live Premier League fixtures each year and will include all 22 clubs in the division within the first three months of the season.

If the coverage is extensive, the advertising schedule is to be no less extravagant. Over

the next month, £5 million is to be spent on an intensive media presentation.

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Welcome back: Whitaker, the Leicestershire batsman, congratulates Agnew on his return yesterday

Agnew answers cry for help

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Agnew had expected to be brandishing a microphone in front of Graham Gooch today. Instead, he will be bowling at him as he makes one of the year's most improbable comebacks for the NatWest Trophy semi-final at Grace Road.

In the two years since he retired from playing the game, Agnew, who played three Test matches for England during his 13-season career, has reported it, first for a tabloid newspaper and then as BBC radio's correspondent.

With more than a touch of trepidation, natural enough for one whose active cricket has been reduced to the odd charity game, he has answered a distress call from his former county, Leicestershire, and is likely to take the new ball against Essex and the man who made yesterday's radio news by being re-appointed England captain for this winter's tour to India.

"I just don't want to look a fool," Agnew said when the die was cast after a morning

session that finally ruled out both David Millns and Vince Wells from the Leicestershire side seeking to reach the final for the first time. "It could all go horribly wrong."

Gooch will be keen to make sure that he does go wrong after a week he will not count among his fondest memories. England lost a Test series despite Gooch while Essex without him, lost important games in both, the championship and Sunday League.

The aura of invincibility that so often surrounded Essex in the past has slipped recently and, with both Mark Waugh and Neil Foster ruled out of

the rest of the season, they have begun to look vulnerable.

Not so vulnerable, however, as Leicestershire without Millns and Wells, the season's most surprising pair of match-winners. Millns might have played for England by now but for his foot injury, yet two years ago he was almost released. Wells came from Kent this year, as a batsman and deputy wicketkeeper.

On this unpromising material, Leicestershire have built a bid for a championship NatWest double, a dream which is only now beginning to fade. Serious candidates for honours should not need to

call bowlers out of retirement when as few as two players are injured and their lack of depth has begun to tell.

The Leicestershire club has announced the first sell-out in its history for today's game, but the ground's capacity of 6,500 will be easily exceeded at Edgbaston, where the other semi-final will lie between Warwickshire's seam bowlers and Northamptonshire's batsmen.

Donald Small, Munton and Reeve comprise the most potent seam attack in county cricket, but they were blunted in last year's semi-final — which Hampshire won at a canter — and they could suffer the same fate now. Northamptonshire have long possessed a strong top to their batting order. Now, with Capel, Curran and Ripley following on, they have an enviable depth that may well prove the difference between the sides.

Lancashire's turmoil, page 24

Fletcher welcomes Gooch's captaincy



KEITH Fletcher yesterday paid tribute to Graham Gooch after the England captain had confirmed he would be leading the national side to India and Sri Lanka this winter.

Fletcher, who takes over from Micky Stewart as England team manager next month, said: "Obviously I'm delighted — we are going to be a better side this winter for him being in it."

Fletcher, his mentor at Essex for 20 years and his predecessor as the county's captain, has watched with interest the way Gooch, who

has led England in 27 Tests, has made the job his own.

Fletcher said: "Graham has improved every year as a captain since he first did the England job briefly in 1988. That improvement comes because of the greater experience you get from year to year. Technically, he's improved a lot and his man-management has also got better."

The thing which impresses me most about Graham is how he retains his marvellous appetite for the game and his desire to do well for both Essex and England. That desire is

more for the team to succeed rather than for himself.

"I've always wanted him to come to India so that we could work together — but I've not really put him under that much pressure."

Gooch, 39, can now look forward to starting the three-match India series, scheduled to be in Calcutta with his hundredth Test cap.

The Lancashire chairman, Bob Bennett, who combined with Fletcher to manage two A team tours, will complete a second successive winter as England tour manager.

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Faldo to tee off in trio of champions

FROM MITCHELL PLATT
GOLF CORRESPONDENT
IN ST LOUIS, MISSOURI

AFTER the dream team, the dream draw, Nick Faldo, the Open champion, Tom Kite, the US Open champion, and Fred Couples, the Masters champion, have been drawn together for the first two rounds of the US PGA championship, which starts here at the Bellin County Club tomorrow.

Faldo enjoys nothing more than to compete in the company of the best. He is, perhaps, the most intimidating player since Jack Nicklaus. His sheer stubbornness, so evident at Muirfield last month, is a trait which even Kite and Couples envy. They

might also eye with some envy the M-85 MacGregor Eye-Orange-Matic driver which Faldo is wielding.

The driver, made in 1952, was acquired by Faldo at the Masters in 1990. He retained the title, but used it in only one other tournament before taking it out of the bag.

Faldo went back to the driver at the end of last year, put a new shaft in it and found that he could hit the ball 20 yards further than with the metal model he was using. "I call it 'The Beast,'" he said. "I also get a much better flight with it and I can carry the ball 260 yards. Driving will be the key this week."

The fairways at Bellin are sown with a hardy strain of grass named Zoysia. The ball

might sit up so a perfect lie is the rule rather than the exception, but it will not run as far.

Faldo, however, is well aware that accuracy is of paramount importance. The contenders will be those who remain on the straight and narrow. In that, Bellin is no different to any other US PGA championship course, because the penal rough is cold, deep and soul-destroying. "It should suit the American challengers," Faldo said. "They see this style of course more often than not."

Faldo is one of 11 European golfers in the field. The others are David Feherty, Anders Forsbrand, David Gilford, Mark James, Bernhard Langer, Sandy Lyle, Colin Montgomerie, José-Maria

Olazábal, Steven Richardson and Ian Woosnam. Severiano Ballesteros has withdrawn.

Olazábal did not play between the US Open and the Open. He is of the opinion that Ballesteros needs a similar rest to rejuvenate his spirit.

Olazábal said that neither he nor Ballesteros would represent Spain in the World Cup in Madrid in November. Faldo, too, has said he will not play. Burch Riber, of the World Cup, said: "It's news to me. There was a logistics problem for Nick because he needs to get to Hawaii for the PGA Grand Slam but we've arranged a jet to take him there."

More golf, page 25

Trainer dismissed over Krabbe's drugs case

KATRIN Krabbe's athletics club yesterday dismissed her trainer for giving the double out-of-competition tests on the athletes in July. Krabbe, who did not go to Barcelona, admitted taking Clenbuterol, but only after her doctor told her that it was not on the banned list.

Thomas Springstein admitted last week that he had bought Clenbuterol on the black market for Krabbe and her teammates, Grit Brauer and Manuela Derr. The drug, used for asthma treatment, is banned by the International Olympic Committee.

The Neubrandenburg Sports Club said: "Thomas Springstein irresponsibly betrayed his duty as trainer of caring for the athletes under his charge. He thereby not only damaged the athletes but

also the club." Traces of the drug were found after random out-of-competition tests on the athletes in July. Krabbe, who did not go to Barcelona, admitted taking Clenbuterol, but only after her doctor told her that it was not on the banned list.

TEN Olympic champions took the first opportunity available to them of post-Barcelona competition by competing in the Mobil grand prix meeting here last night. They included Kevin Young, the only athlete to set a world record in an individual event at the Olympics, and he still had the fire in his belly.

Although Young was almost a second outside the world record of 46.78sec he set for the 400 metres hurdles, he was still comfortably clear of his challengers.

Furthermore, he maintained his impressive record of being unbeaten in grand prix races this season and of improving his time with each successive appearance. He ran 47.60sec, with Winthrop Graham, of Jamaica, second in 48.22sec.

Young will be pleased to have beaten Simeon Matei, the world champion from Zambia, who was disqualified in the finals in Barcelona. There can be no suggestion now that Matei might have won. Kris Akabusi, the Olympic bronze medal-winner, was sixth in 49.35.

It was here two years ago that the Burch Reynolds saga began. Reynolds, the 400 metres world record-holder from the United States, failed a drugs test after competing in this meeting in 1990 and his suspension would have expired today had he not contested the findings with the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF), the governing body.

Reynolds, who has claimed all along that he did not take drugs, took his case to the United States court and was cleared by the Supreme Court to run in the country's national Olympic trials in June.

However, his challenge to the IAAF's authority precipitated an extension to the ban: it announced on Monday that his suspension would be lengthened by more than four months, to December 31.

Primo Nebiolo, the IAAF president, said that allowing one athlete to challenge his organisation's authority in such a way would open the floodgates. The additional punishment has been applied under IAAF Rule 53.1 (VIII), which says that it may declare ineligible any athlete who has "been responsible for any breaches of the rule or other conduct which, in the opinion of the IAAF council, is considered to be insulting or improper or likely to bring the sport into disrepute".

Reynolds was unrepentant on hearing the news. "My lawyers will be very aggressive in response to this and we hope to obtain a resolution," he said. He is seeking \$12 million in compensation.

"I served two years for nothing," Reynolds added. "I ran with the authority of the government and the court system here in the US. The biggest thing is the vindictive part." He said that he would compete on the US indoor circuit next season.

The grand prix final is to be held in Turin on September 4, but the hammer competition will be separated from the main event. It has been scheduled for Brussels on August 28 because the final coincides with the first weekend of the Italian football season: the football clubs, Torino and Juventus, were concerned about potential damage to the pitch they share.

The Lancashire chairman, Bob Bennett, who combined with Fletcher to manage two A team tours, will complete a second successive winter as England tour manager.

□ An audience of 13.3 million viewers watched Linford Christie win his 100 metres gold medal in Barcelona, the BBC announced today. It was the corporation's third-highest viewing figure of the year, behind the Grand National and the Frank Bruno-José Ribeiro heavyweight contest.



THE TWELFTH p8
Moor the
merrier — a
fashion
takeover

Young
keeps
his fire
alive



LIFE & TIMES

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 12 1992

WOMEN p5
Rosie Barnes,
the rebirth
of a
campaigner



Putting it politely, you're wrong

Who will watch a
new television quiz
on etiquette?

Virginia Ironside
prefers more
modern guidelines
to good manners

When I arrived as agony aunt at *Woman* in 1978 I was astonished to find, still lying around in the backs of old drawers, leaflets entitled *Etiquette and Manners for Men*. There was even one on "Laying a Table...". "Where table-mats are to be used to protect a polished surface, these can be laid at each place ready for the plate to be put on them," it advised, as if their readers had not a brain to rub between them. And "At breakfast one needs tacks for toast and a deep plate with a spoon for cereal if this is to be served".

There was a leaflet called *Guest in the House*... "If the offer to help with the washing up is accepted, freshly laundered tea towels, please".

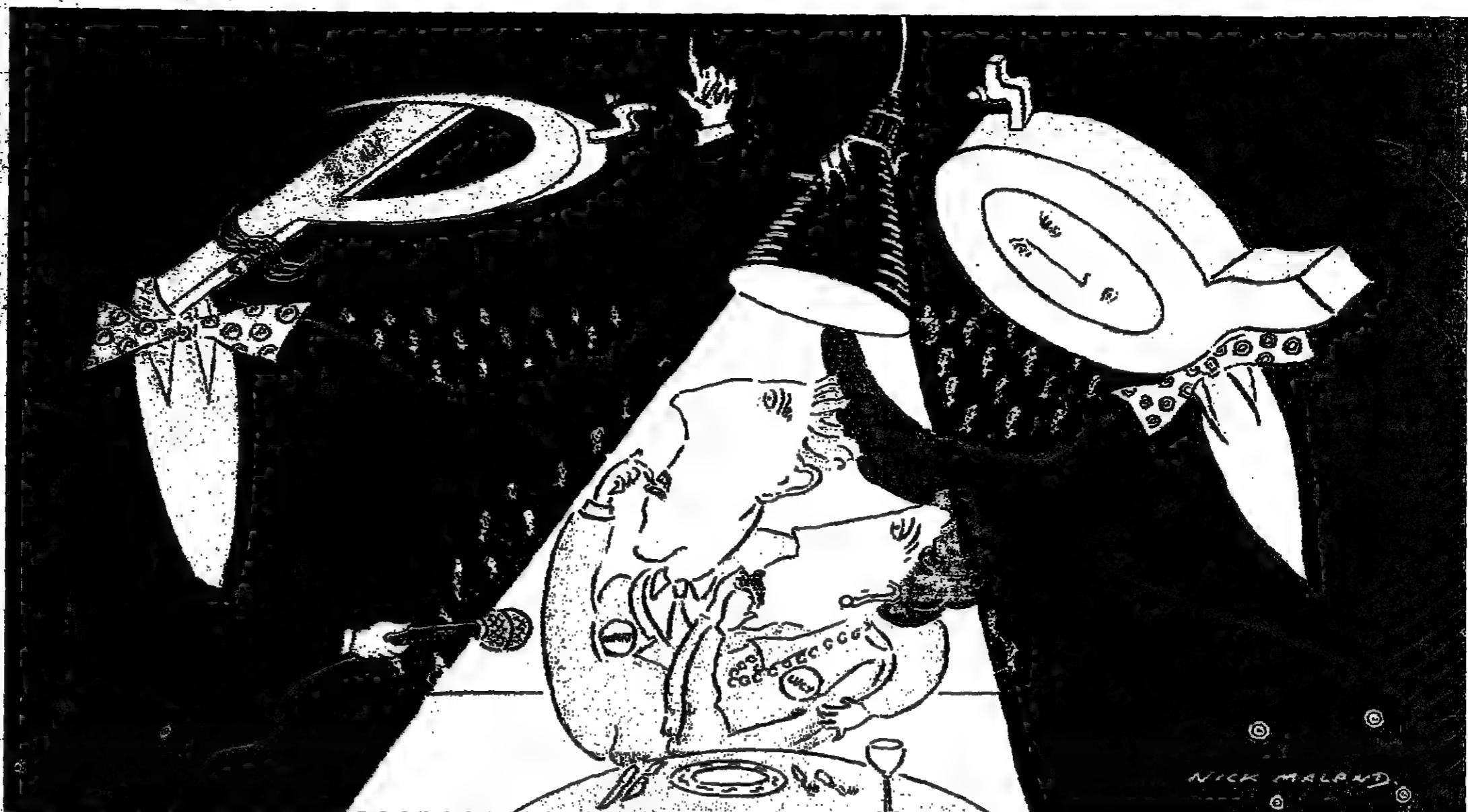
In my new reign, these were brushed away and I never thought I'd see or hear the like again. But, blow me, if etiquette and manners aren't suddenly news again. Last week Lord Ridley of Lindesdale sounded off on these pages about the general decline in manners (rather rich, some have said, coming from a cabinet minister who served in a government that actually cultivated the very "so you're making money" attitude he complains about). And tomorrow there is a new quiz programme on BBC2 called *Ps and Qs* which addresses just the same arcane issues that I had dismissed so many years ago. "Should a butler have his thumbs on the silver salver he is presenting to you?" "Should you wear a hat and gloves indoors?" "How do you pronounce the Duke of Buccleuch?" And so on.

Rachel Purnell, the series director, justifies this arch programme, which features an actor dressed up as a butler and Tony Slattery in a rather gaudy smoking jacket, by claiming that "In an age when everything is a gamble, you can't afford to make a mistake. A trivial error when you have supper with the boss could be crucial. For instance, do you take a bottle of wine with you? We wanted to help people and have a bit of fun at the same time."

Sales of etiquette books are doing well — like *Debrett's* guides to manners, Drusilla Beyton's *Modern Manners* (two other short versions come out in September) and Moira Bremner's *Modern Etiquette and Successful Behaviour*.

But Major Proops of the *Daily Mirror* has found no increase in etiquette questions in her postbag — and as the grandest old lady of agony aunts, who celebrates her fortieth anniversary in the job this year, she should know. "In the old days people were very anxious, women particularly, about etiquette. There was a particular hang-up about gloves, too, and I was always being asked whether one should shake hands with them on or off."

"But in the 1960s and 1970s women experienced a dramatic change in the perception they had of themselves. They began to feel more secure and confident. These days, particularly when they



really are stronger as so many have to be breadwinners, they don't have to make any statement or behave in a certain way. It is only when people are insecure that they worry about whether to call it a napkin or a serviette."

Ms Beyton, who was an advisor to the *Ps and Qs* programme, feels it is the insecurity of the financial situation which explains a renewed interest in manners and etiquette.

"In the 1960s parents dismissed the importance of etiquette in favour of freedom of expression and free speech — admirable, but it left their children wondering where they were. I was in favour of all those reforms and sweeping away of snobbery, but the pendulum swung very far and a re-appraisal of the importance of manners was timely. Particularly now. Because when you are surrounded by great uncertainties, you cling to those small areas which you can influence in some degree. That's why, during the war, people still changed for dinner. Of course it didn't matter, but it all suggested control and continuity. "And John Major only had to mention classlessness and suddenly everyone started thinking about class."

Jonathan Meades was the rather

reluctant host of one of *Ps and Qs*' teams, "I only did it for the money" and felt the programme was a missed opportunity. "It ignored the broader topic of current manners and manners. Manners haven't stuck in a rigid code since the 1950s and the situation now is much more interesting but much harder to pin down. The really important point is that society has bifurcated time and again and there are so many tribal groups with different sets of manners. In the north, for instance, you are

expected to dress for dinner; in Bristol you're barely allowed to wear a tie."

Certainly readers who write in to me at the problem page of the *Sunday Mirror* don't ask how to address a duke or distinguish a steak knife from a fish knife. If anything, the issue now is whether we eat meat or fish at all; rather than which knife we use to eat it with. And no one would ever ask whether a silver mink was posher than a fox — fur-coats, old status-symbols are now deemed highly tacky — because

they are bad-mannered to animals. And there are new, more general, social situations that do demand a view on what is the "right" way to go about things. For instance a mother will write to me saying her daughter is living with her boyfriend — and they are coming to stay. Does she put them in the same room? No right or wrong here, as it's her house she can surely put them where she wants.

Then there are the letters about weddings and whether the step-parents should be invited and if so where they should sit, particularly if they all hate each other. One bride-to-be wrote saying her father had left when she was two and had only just reappeared vaguely on the scene, extremely offended he was not being asked to give his daughter away. She preferred to be given away by her much more loving step-father. What should she do? Then there is: "My daughter left

not yet read exactly how you ask a partner to use a condom. "With sensitivity" isn't quite good enough. Then there are other issues. For instance, since we take miscarriage and stillbirth much more seriously than we used to, do they merit letters of condolence? If you have already splashed out your friend's wedding present, do you have to splash out when he married a second time? What is the correct way to introduce a partner? (Ms Beyton still says that "boyfriend" "girlfriend" is best, even if their hair is white). Can you smack another mother's child? Can a girl ask a man out? (Yes, wrote Irma

Kurtz, the agony aunt for *Cosopolitan*, in answer to a reader: "After all, men have always risked rejection and now that we're fibbering it's our turn.")

And what about homosexuals? Should they be given a double-bed when they come to stay with a partner? Should you be offended at a phoned "thank you" from a child you have given a present to, rather than a letter? And should vegetarians ring their dietary facts through before arriving for supper or simply pick at the potatoes and pass when they arrive?

Looking at the broader issue of manners generally, it is the changing fashions in advice on how to live happily with one another that are most interesting.

In the 1970s there was a great fashion for throwing manners to the wind. The title, the "Me Generation" suggested that thinking about anyone else, the essence of good manners, was ridiculous. Honesty was considered all-important — and for "honesty" you could often read "rudeness".

Almighty rows were thought to be good for marriages, (or partnerships as we now call them). Without them, they would be "dead".

Now rows are perceived as destructive and bad-mannered behaviour. The advice given these days is to be extremely polite to each other. Make a "space" to sit down and discuss your differences. Allow each other five or ten minutes to express your views and don't interrupt. Whatever you do, keep your temper and try to understand the other person's feelings. Then put your views back to your partner. There is a marvellously stylised way of doing this, according to the books on how to make your partnership work, which involves

using extremely mannered sentences on the lines of: "I understand that you are angry..." or "I accept that you feel jealous..." or "It would have made me feel less worried had you rung up and told me you would be four hours late". The counsellors haven't actually yet suggested you say these things wearing gloves and a hat but sometimes you feel the gear can't be far behind. And "assertion", that peculiar word which means making your views felt without losing your temper or making the other person feel like a lowly worm, is another example of the increase in people's search for good manners.

People are surely not interested in the arcane and snobbish etiquette as addressed in *Ps and Qs*. But there are new social situations that require guidelines and looking at manners in a much broader sense, we are surely all much more interested than we used to be in the kind of behaviour that makes life easier and pleasanter for all of us.

TOMORROW

An audience's view of Edinburgh and other British festivals

Barm cakes are a girl's best friend

SINGLE LIFE

Lynne Truss prefers
buns for tea to life
with the polo set



When Raoul Fitzgerald O'Flaherty, the hot-blooded Irish-American international polo ace, called me up on Friday from his helicopter, begging me to join him on a weekend trip to Palm Beach, I admit I was slightly taken aback. This is a bit irregular. I thought I had planned a nice weekend rearranging my dried fruit collection and mending my string bag, and now here was Randy Raoul hovering speculatively over my front garden, showering emerald trinkets into my bird-bath, and demanding by loud-hailer that I go and inspect some new ponies.

Of course I became an expert on horse-flesh years ago, when I avidly consumed books such as *Jill Enjoyed Her Ponies*. Also, I spent many childhood Sunday afternoons "treading in" (stampeding on divots) between chukkas at a nearby polo club. Yet I had a strange feeling that it was my body, not my equine expertise, that Raoul was really after. The O'Flaherty triplets are all notorious womanizers; but Raoul is the best lover of the three, ranked number eight in the world. Raoul clearly wanted to pluck me from my flat, lavish all sorts of sexual attention on me, drive me wild with jewels and frocks, and drop hilarious innuendos about the thrill of

the benefit of the husband (not rich, to get excited in the polo tournament bits ("Come on, you brave little pony!"), and to self-servingly, and occasionally breaks off during a particularly juicy bit to say offhandedly "Not very good, this, actually", before plumping back again and memorising the page number for later on).

For me personally, on the other hand, *Polo* recalled all those Jill

and *Her Ponies* books I used to read when I was ten. Who will win the silver cup? Will the pony rescued from cruelty turn into the best little pony in the world? This jolly gymkhana stuff made me feel quite young again, but it also made me wonder whether the Jill in question grew up to become Jill in later life. It is not impossible. After all, the fictional Jill's mother was a writer — but an unsuccessful one who clearly overlooked the bankable nature of her own daughter's pony-mad activities. Poor Jill was obliged to wear second-hand jodhpurs to the Pony Club Gymkhana, which is just the sort of indignity (in polo-burbs, anyway) that makes an ambitious girl grow up aching for a shot at some serious dash.

I am not sure, in retrospect, that we were supposed to despise Jill's mum for being a hopeless breadwinner. In fact, I used to think it was sweet that when the pig-tailed Jill came home on summer afternoons — all dusky, from a hack on Black Boy, all worried about where the next curry-comb was coming from — there would be Mother, leaning out of the window of their little cottage, excitedly waving a small piece of paper. "A cheque!" she would yell. "I've sold a story in London!" And my heart would leap. "Saddle up Black Boy again,

Jill." Mother would say, "Today we'll have buns for tea!"

Such innocence. It makes you feel all old and jaded and peculiar. True, I always shout "Buns for tea!" when a cheque arrives in the post, but it is heavily ironic, since I know perfectly well that the money will only service the overdraft, or go half-way towards some car insurance (buns doesn't come into it). But I prefer the world of "Buns for tea" to the casual purchase of *Renoir's* and *Ferrari's* to be found in *Polo*. Cream puffs evidently mean nothing on the international polo circuit: teacakes make them laugh.

I think this is why, in the end, I turned down Raoul's tempting offer of the Palm Beach trip. So what, if these polo people are good at jewels and orgasms, if they are blind to the value of an honest barm cake? Of course, memory may be playing tricks here: perhaps Jill and her mom sang *Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend* in the evenings, while flipping through glossy magazines for pictures of rich people. Perhaps they would have killed for a chance to fly off to the world of Carter and great sex, leaving the second-hand jodhpurs in a heap on the ground. In which case, when Raoul O'Flaherty came to call, perhaps I made a rather large mistake.

SIMPSON'S NEW

EXPANDED

MEN'S CASUALWEAR

DEPARTMENT

NOW STRETCHES

ALL THE WAY

TO THE CONTINENT.

Nautica, J.O.E., Jézéquel, Valentino. Are these the kind of names you expect to hear bandied about at Simpson? Yes is the answer, because in our new Men's Casualwear Department on the second floor, there are now more international designer names than ever before. Of course, the very highest standards of tailoring demanded from our traditional English designers still apply. So while a lot of these names sound rather foreign, they're all very much at home at Simpson.



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PICCADILLY

All human life is briefly there

Should soap operas deal with social problems? Jane Hardy looks at how television favourites interpret reality for viewers

In television is where the characters' labels come on the outside. "Homeless teenager", "Aids sufferer", "taken racism" — these are the kind of stereotypical figures introduced into drama series simply so that a topical issue can be tackled. The Americans began it with such impeccable earnestness in social awareness as *Hill Street Blues*, *LA Law* and *Cagney and Lacey*. But British radio (with *The Archers*) is well-practised, and television is catching on fast.

In a way, it goes back to Dickens, who was hacking out chapters of *The Old Curiosity Shop* for an addicted readership, much as scriptwriters work on the "rape three-handers" or the "priest and girlfriend" storyline today. Like an *EastEnders* scriptwriter, Dickens knew his issues — gambling the plight of the young carer — and how to sustain interest by dramatic scenes. And since the death of Little Nell we've watched some corkers: the death of little Gill (from *Aids in EastEnders*); the amputation of adulterous Don (his foot, in *Coronation Street*); Derek's flight from the arms of the Church to the arms of Margaret (*Brookside*).

Cynicism about the motives of the scriptwriters is perhaps misplaced — although, refreshingly, Mal Young, producer and planner with *Phil Redmond of Brookside*, admits that the fact that the Barry Grant character was known not to be leaving the soap helped stimulate publicity when he was suspected of committing murder. "We played a whodunit," he says, "and used it to our advantage."

In any case, the scriptwriters mainly resist — with a quality display of flattery — the notion that they are issue-television writers. Deborah Cook, *EastEnders*' most eminent writer, who was given the *Aids* death scene assignment (and did it well, adapting some last words from her heroine Edith Sitwell), says issue television should not exist. Then, several breaths later, she mentions she would love to introduce child abuse into Albert Square. "But I'd only do it if the right character was there; it has to be

character-led." Via the greedy young entrepreneur Ian? "No, he's too important; people love to hate him." Of the American soaps, the only one she has so far liked was *Hill Street Blues*: "Precisely because it stood issues neatly on their head. I find it outrageous, because of the way it suggests a serious problem like tranquilliser abuse can be solved in three episodes. It's introduced in one episode, peaks in the second and is solved, usually by a character talking to Helen, in the third."



Deborah Cook, scriptwriter for *EastEnders*: "Everyone gets his or her comeuppance"

Adele Rose, a writer on *Coronation Street* since the Sixties (she got in because of a writing partnership with Jack Rosenthal), is equally defiant. "I hope we never do issue stuff. We're interested in characters, and never say at writers' meetings 'Oh, we must do Aids' or 'we must do racism'." That could be one reason why those topics will not be making Weatherfield headlines soon.

Asked whether the *Street* might one day include a gay character, Rose said: "If there was a new character and it was appropriate for them to develop that way... but we really don't want to ram social concerns down people's throats." *Brookside* also offers a different

dropped, once it has produced bigger audience figures.

Yet some *Street* characters do seem more emblematic than flesh and blood. The moment poor Ted, Rita's latest husband, appeared on someone's notebook, he was doomed. "Oh, we knew he was going to die," says Rose, airily. "We didn't want too much of a happy ending — he definitely won't be going to Lourdes. We wanted something for the actress to get her teeth into. What we did not say was 'Let's deal with death; give Ted a brain tumour'."

There are, as Cook suggests, real dangers in tackling serious topics in half an hour. The soap reaches, perhaps, 14 million viewers — more when there is a good crisis up to 16 million for *Gill's* death. The influence on them is immense. Members of the public still try to rent houses or get jobs on the *Street*. It is an adjuster to, even a substitute for, life.

And if real life is short, soap life (and art) is shorter. Twenty-four minutes per show, on commercial ITV. But the time-scale of an important story can stretch — in the case of *Coronation Street*, stretch over decades. That is why Rose claims it has the rhythms of real life, with losers becoming winners in time. *Vida*, Mavis, Mal Young of *Brookside* feels you should not leave a significant piece of plot too quickly, because that is cheating. "Our character with breast cancer is going to be affected by this for a long time. People write in saying 'Oh, it's too gloomy,' but we don't, unlike some soaps, deal with something, then tidy it out of the way. That's not like life."

Messy life is the model for *Brookside*, the show originally billed as a "continuing drama series". *Brookside* goes in for four-walled super-realism, presumably even better than Strindberg's three-walled stage version. The programme-makers can shoot in the real bedrooms or bathrooms. As Young lyrically puts it: "We had Owen sitting on the bath, she was on the toilet seat, and you got these echoing bathroom acoustics very domestic."

Brookside also offers a different

monologue from the other soaps. "We don't suspend the reality," says Young. That means not suspending the amorality either. Different soap morality involves bringing forward Judgment Day.



Dickensian echo: The dying Gill (Sue Dawson), visited by Mark (Todd Carty) in *EastEnders*

A Cook says: "Everyone gets his or her comeuppance, which is why Pat or Frank or Ian couldn't be involved in child abuse. They'd have to go." Adele Rose agrees, citing the fact that the *Street's* McDonald twin was in trouble with the police for having handled stolen car radios, rather than actually stealing them, which would have been that much more serious.

But such caution is not the norm

in *Brookside* Close, which had its murderer on the loose and has allowed a depressed mother to abandon her baby. Shaun Duggan, aged just 20, was the new writer given the postnatal depression episodes. "I was brought up on soap operas, and what's great about it is the fact you have an audience which maybe doesn't go to the theatre or cinema." A former Royal Court Young Writers' award-winner, Duggan believes in challenging these viewers. "When I wrote the Sammy story, I consulted my Mum because she had postnatal depression with me, but then I just used my imagination. In a way, it's easier to write women."

What resulted was a two-page

monologue for the character (long for a soap), explaining why she couldn't look after the baby. Starting with a challenge to her husband, father and two onlookers, she moved onto the dangers of projected images of motherhood. "I read all the stupid mother and baby mags and knitted a card," she says, "but it didn't do any good."

If the soaps have a new direction, that must be it. Less sun, sea and sangria, more sympathy with the good old human condition. And talking of *Eldorado* (which was dismissed by all of those I spoke to except Duggan as rubbish), the BBC's latest soap has apparently not thought of any on-screen issues yet. It is almost inevitable that they will.

This *Kaleidoscope* itself could have benefited from adopting the first of these approaches. The presenter, Paul Allen, made intelligent points but never challenged anybody, so we were left with a lot of questions hanging in the air like balloon strings.

The first of a new Radio 4 series, *The Standard Setters* (Sundays) made my case for me. Here the interviewer, Dr Edward Norman, really sailed into his victim, Judge James Pickles, with splendid results.

Norman wanted to get at some definition of the moral basis that underpins the law.

Pickles liked using the word "wicked" of people he had sent to jail — did that mean he took a religious view of sin? Not at



Judge James Pickles: a Radio 4 Standard Setter

all, said Pickles, quite unperturbed: he was an agnostic humanist, and considered that the prime duty was to respect and enhance human life.

Norman couldn't get much further on that point, so he tried another tack. Surely the law did more than just stop people harming each other? Surely it did impose some idea of civic duty on them? What about the obligation on parents to ensure that their children were educated? Pickles cheerfully declared that he had never been "unduly perplexed" by these questions.

The discussion may have got no further than showing that we are all in a moral muddle, but it illuminated two types of mind, both valuable; and Norman did succeed, as the programme went on, in pinning down many inconsistencies in current attitudes. No bland presenter he.

Costing the Earth (Radio 4) is a forum for a group of people who are quite sure about our civic duty — the environmentalists. I tuned in on Saturday especially to hear the winners of the World Wildlife Fund song contest. What a disappointment! Cheerful ditties about rain forests coming down, choruses like "There's no more world to live in" sung without a care in the world. Give me the Pastoral Symphony any time.

DERWENT MAY

RADIO REVIEW

Ethics in the ether

Oral issues were fizzing on Radio 4 last weekend. On Saturday, *Kaleidoscope* had a discussion about television, called *The Ethics of Documentary*. Nick Broomfield, the director of the *Jani Allan* film (as it might be called), *The Leader, the Driver and the Driver's Wife*, was unrepentant about the way he had been deliberately late when interviewing the far-right South African Terre Blanche, just to make him angry and so reveal more about him.

By contrast, Louise Panton was uneasy about the fact that when she was interviewing homeless young boys being propositioned by homosexuals, she was only allowed to show the boys' faces, not the molesters' — and she wondered if she should even have done that. "TV reveals only the victims," she said.

The individual moral problems these two had to face got caught up in a more general clash between the directors in the opposed *Panorama* and *World in Action* traditions. The first group work out, in general, what they want to argue before they start interviewing, and have a presenter whose approach is "Trust me." This is the philosophy of the BBC's director-general-elect, John Birt. The second group go out and interview with as open a mind as they can, with the watchword "Hear them."

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"Images of bombed buildings by Piper or Sutherland are close in spirit": Robert Mason's *Safety Helmet Area*

Men at work, an artist at his labours

Richard Cork on the rich and dramatic results of the painter

Robert Mason's study of the Broadgate Development in London

obession, and show how readily he adapted to the pressures of exploring the entire area, from the vertiginous cab of the tallest crane to the deep tunnels where the substructure was prepared.

A selection of these images is now on display at the Guildhall Library, along with some of the notebooks and photographs which Mason accumulated. The dense, crowded hang suits the overall character of pictures which stress the urgency and concentrated endeavour of the men labouring on this complex site.

Mason's involvement with Broadgate began three years ago, when the developer Stuart Lipton invited him to produce a single picture of the construction work. He was a surprising choice for such a project. Over the previous decade, Mason had been preoccupied with images of loss and mortality. The death of his parents, brother and sister when he was young dominated his imagination. By painting human skulls, animal carcasses and crouching figures burdened by melancholy, he confronted his childhood trauma and tried to exorcise the pain.

At Broadgate, what began as a one-off commission ended up absorbing all Mason's energies for a year. He finally produced an astonishing 150 pictures, ranging from swift oil sketches to elaborate triptychs. They testify to the growth of an

obsession, and show how readily he adapted to the pressures of exploring the entire area, from the vertiginous cab of the tallest crane to the deep tunnels where the substructure was prepared.

Seen from behind, another night-shift worker negotiates his way through a potentially treacherous tangle of girders, mesh and scattered implements. The arc of metal curving round his leg seems ready to ensnare him.

Mason's respect for the men he encountered lies at the heart of this exhibition. They are the heroes of his Broadgate work, just as the men and women of Clydeside were celebrated by Stanley Spencer in his wartime series of shipbuilding pictures. But Mason's figures seem more vulnerable than Spencer's swarming, tireless Glaswegians.

One yellow-coated worker stoops over a half-finished floor with tangible weariness, and the looseness with which his form is handled only emphasises the feeling of human frailty. Whereas, whenever Mason closes in on their faces, all loss, the sense of arduous physical labour and the tumultuous environment, the tension slackens.

Spencer is not the only wartime artist whose work is evoked here. Images of bombed buildings by Piper or Sutherland are close in spirit to his unpopulated paintings

of decrepit structures awaiting demolition. One juxtaposes a placard bearing the words "Safety Helmet Area" with the half-dismantled facade of a City office. Memories of the Blitz are stirred in the maelstrom of Mason's paint, which stresses the dissolution of the old more than the emergence of the new.

For a while, at least, an embattled mood prevails on the site. Any one obliged to use Liverpool Street station during the construction period will recall how services continued despite apparently impossible odds. Mason catches the air of indomitable persistence in a painting called *Life Goes On*, where diehard commuters struggle through a mélée of obstacles in order to reach their destination.

The most memorable images concentrate on scenes far below the ground, where Mason witnessed herculean activity in the network of Victorian tunnels. Seeing a survey of Henry Moore's tube-sheeter drawings at the British Museum beforehand had already made him conscious of the mysterious atmosphere to be

through ordinary pet shops, though they do not make good pets. That, at least, no longer happens.

But a glimpse of a street market in Vietnam where 63 species were on sale, including the rare clouded leopard, did not suggest that an early end to the business is likely. The irony is that those who are the ultimate purchasers of smuggled wildlife probably regard themselves as animal lovers.

Some of them, no doubt, watched this programme. It would have been interesting to have heard what they had to say. NIGEL HAWKES

Thanks to British television's importation of the highly successful *Miami Vice*, and various documentary outings that we probably know far more about crime in Miami than we are ever likely to about misdemeanours in Manchester. Everything in Florida is apparently bigger, more exciting, more exotic, and so much easier to film.

So it was that *Nature Watch* (ITV, last night) making a programme about the smuggling of wild animals as pets, felt honour-bound to board the Miami shuttle. Dean Freeman, an undercover agent for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, did not fail them.

Wearing a bright T-shirt and a bushy-mustache, he showed them a large and beautiful lizard and then took Julian Petifer on a round of the various middlemen in this nasty trade. The camera was hidden in a hold-all.

The bottom line for me is to put these nerds out of business," declared Dean, but as usual we saw nobody actually put out of business, or even charged. Like the communist

cells of yesteryear, which were often kept going only by the undercover FBI agents who infiltrated them, one gets the feeling that illicit traders in virtually every commodity are now being sustained by the "stings" organised by agents whose job it is to put them out of business.

Why, if Dean knew of two dealers handling rare species illegally, and took Nature Watch to film them, did he not

charge them with some offence? Search me, but this was Miami. The investigation had been going on for three years, and still had a long way to go, we were told. The footage shot in Britain was rather more prosaic, but it told much the same story.

Everywhere in the West there are people who want to own exotic pets, many of them belonging to endangered species. Everywhere in develop-

ing countries there are people happy to supply them. In between is a thin blue line of customs officers, wildlife agents and British television crews.

Every year 180,000 birds are imported into Britain, many of them snatched from the wild. The trapper in Guyana who spirits a parrot from the trees gets \$2 for a bird which will ultimately fetch up to \$2,000.

Every day the customs officers at Heathrow face 1,000 boxes containing live animals, only a fraction of which they have the time to examine. The trade will go on because it is literally unstoppable.

Some progress does seem to have been made. In the Sixties, according to Molly Badham of Twycross Zoo, chimpanzees were imported in large numbers and sold

through ordinary pet shops, though they do not make good pets. That, at least, no longer happens.

But a glimpse of a street market in Vietnam where 63 species were on sale, including the rare clouded leopard, did not suggest that an early end to the business is likely. The irony is that those who are the ultimate purchasers of smuggled wildlife probably regard themselves as animal lovers.

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NIGEL HAWKES

DERWENT MAY

TELEVISION REVIEW

Market forces mean dirty business as usual

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NIGEL HAWKES

DERWENT MAY

</div

Tiptoe through the tea-dance

Josephine Akrill
finds that Paris
is swaying again
to the tango
and the cha-cha-cha



FORTIES nostalgia has hit Paris this summer, with Edith Piaf lookalikes in platform shoes and carefully rolled-up cuffs parading the streets. *Brûlé* Parisian youth is abandoning "le rap", "le funk" and "le house" for the more traditional delights of "le musette", the accordion-based music of the Parisian *faubourgs*. Instead of Saturday-night clubbing, *les jeunes* are joining *les retrouvailles* at the Sunday afternoon tea-dances and *guinguettes* which are currently all the rage in and around the French capital.

The Mecca for hardened waltzers and fox-trotters is La Java, Paris's oldest existing "bal musette", and the only one to retain a full-time orchestra led, *bien entendu*, by the accordion.

Hidden away off the bustling rue du *faubourg du Temple*, which leads up to Belleville, Parisian Chinatown, La Java is easily missed, squeezed as it is between seedy shops selling electric fans, pig's trotters and cut-price underwear. But venture down a narrow covered arcade with stained-glass windows, redolent of the Art Deco *dome* of the Galeries Lafayette, and you find yourself in a 1940s fairytale where spots of light whirr crazily across the dancers' faces.

Here, couples *d'un certain age* clasp each other in a range of poses from *prima* and *proper* to close and clinging. Strappy sandals daintily trip out the *javan* and *cha-cha-chas*, only leaving the sawdust-strewn dancefloor to sip a *menthe à l'eau* or a *petit verre de blanc*, in the high-backed red velvet *banquettes*.

"You feel as if you've been whisked back half a century," says one newcomer — precisely the intention of La Java's *patron*, Jacques Morino, who has kept the original 1920s decor, all glittering silver spangles and sky-blue walls, "exactly as it was in the days of Edith Piaf and Maurice Chevalier."

The music, too, remains unchanged. The eight-piece Orchestre de la Java, led by accordionist Christian Dandoi, delights its regulars with old favourites such as "La Reine de la Musette", and "Le Petit Vin Blanc", as well as the Edith Piaf-Jacques Brel repertoire.

If the *bal musette* is now a typically



Edith Piaf in New York in 1948: singer from an epoch of music and style that young Parisians are now trying energetically to recapture

Parisian institution, its origins are more rural. A kind of primitive bagpipe played in the Auvergne region of France, the *musette* was brought to Paris during the huge migration of Auvergnat workers to the capital in the 19th century. They

explain, as he hands out the 40-franc tickets to an unremiring stream of customers ranging from students to OAPs, all with the same expectant glint in their eye and swing in their step.

"Now the other clubs have copied us, and there's competition from the revival of the *guinguette* (open-air dances along the banks of the Marne river). But we've got all our old faithfuls who wouldn't miss the live band for anything. Some of them travel for two hours to get here."

The rush of customers seems to have abated. Christian explains, "It's five francs cheaper before 2.30. They'll kill themselves to arrive by then — and they'll dance the afternoon away until the dot of 7 o'clock."

"Back again, Yvette?" he smiles at a sprightly woman of, I reckon, about 50, trips gaily by. "I'll have to install a camped for you!" As she disappears down the staircase he informs me in a confidential whisper: "She's 68, but she's got the legs of a *jeune fille*. A dance a week does more good than a bottle of pills — it should be free on the *Securite Sociale*!"

Bought by Jacques Morino in 1968, La Java will later pass into the capable hands of his son, Christian, who currently mans the entrance, and declares himself to be "steeped in *le musette* up to my neck".

"We were the first in Paris to revive the *thé-dansant* ten years ago," he

explains, as he hands out the 40-franc tickets to an unremiring stream of customers ranging from students to OAPs, all with the same expectant glint in their eye and swing in their step.

Down on the dance-floor the couples are forming. Christian grabs one of his regulars — "Give the *jeune Anglaise* a dance, André". Feebly, protesting that I don't know a charleston from a cha-cha-cha, I am led onto the multicoloured vinyl and swing into a brisk walk, rocked by the gentle accordion and the swishing lights.

André, or Dédé, as he is known at La Java, is 64, a cobbler, and disdainful of the waltz. "Personally, I only dance the tango and the paso doble — the rest send me to sleep," he scoffs. "But you should see me dance the tango with a girl who knows her paces — *je suis un vrai torero*!"

My own legs are already weakening, and my head spinning, as Dédé lets up the pace, and we slide off for an *orange pressé*. At the bar, Delphine, 26, is also taking a breather. She is here with a group of friends who adore "le Rétro" — the French term for anything pre-1970s in music and dance styles.

"Modern nightclubs bore me — they're so *triste*, with everyone dancing on their own. Here you have real contact with your partner. I know people here who've been coming for

years — since the war. And the older they are, the more *irritantes*," she adds, before being whisked off for a tempestuous tango with a greying Portuguese gentleman who dips and swoops her in a series of graceful *tombées*, whilst singing "O Sole Mio" at the top of his voice — a regular occurrence, judging by the *regular* faces of his fellow dancers.

Playing to such a varied audience is one of the delights of the Orchestre de la Java, according to 27-year-old lead accordionist Christian Dandoi, who himself strikes a strange balance between *la vio* and *la moderne*, dressed in the orchestra's regulation blacktie, with the coquettish addition of an earring and a pair of leather cowboy boots.

Out of the corner of my eye I spot Dédé who has appropriated one of the Java's red tablecloths and is flourishing it *à la torero* to the delight of a flushed Yvette and another *copine*. Things are hotting up on the *piste de danse*, and the afternoon is still young as the orchestra launches into the "Tango des Jours Heureux". As Delphine points out: "There's no age limit on having a good time at La Java!"

PASSPORT TO FRANCE: The Times offers readers a weekend in France

Luxury break for two



TODAY. The Times invites you to take advantage of the second of five opportunities to win a luxury weekend break for two at a Relais & Châteaux hotel of your choice in France with return flights and hire of a car included.

Regarded by many as the world's finest chain of hotels and restaurants, Relais & Châteaux is offering readers a weekend for two including table d'hôte dinner, accommodation and breakfast with service and tax included. Winners may select from a choice of 123 hotels of character throughout France. Relais & Châteaux originated in France and was created by seven like-minded hoteliers in 1954. As well as the châteaux, the group has grown to include mills, abbeys, manor houses and important houses that have been converted into comfortable hotels or elegant restaurants.

Beyond that of quality, the philosophy now, as then, is based on the five "Cs" of the association: character, courtesy, calm, charm and cuisine. Almost 30 years later, the chain is represented in 40 nations. From a gastronomic experience in Alsace to a late-season break on the Côte d'Azur, from the golf courses of Brittany to the culture and beauty of the Loire Valley, Relais & Châteaux offers hospitality at its very best.

The winners of today's competition will receive a complimentary copy of the Relais & Châteaux International Guide 1992 (which also lists 20 British establishments) and the corresponding European road map, valued at £7.50. The International Guide provides all the relevant information you will need to help you select your hotel.

Return flights to Paris or Lyons will be provided by TAT European Airlines, the French independent airline, which has recently launched new international scheduled flights from Gatwick serving Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris.

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The

Fighters can have dimples, too

Glad to be out of the House, Rosie Barnes has found an even broader canvas for her causes, Alice Thomson discovers

Next month Rosie Barnes becomes the new director of Birthright, the charity that funds medical research to improve the health of women and babies. When Birthright advertised the position it was looking for someone who could cope with the pressures of running a large charity, who would not be daunted by having the Princess of Wales as patron and who would champion the rights of women. Mrs Barnes, the politician with the housewife's charm, the dimpled cheeks and the flouncy blonde curls, appeared, on the surface, an odd choice.

The Social Democratic Party MP for Greenwich, southeast London, always seemed the kind of woman content to sit on the sideline and not make too much fuss. Someone who had just stumbled into the House of Commons by accident in 1987 and who followed adoringly after David Owen, supporting the doctor through thick and thin. At the last election the Labour opponent who succeeded her labelled her the "motherhood, apple pie and funny rabbit party".

When I went to interview Mrs Barnes at her terraced house in Greenwich she was about to leave for her holidays and was bustling around in a lace towelling tracksuit. She had to drive her 16-year-old daughter Daisy to the hairdresser, cook breakfast for seven-year-old Joseph and husband Graham and feed the two dogs.

But the housewife's image is deceptive. When Mrs Barnes lost at the general election in April, she wept in front of the cameras, but the next day she opened up the appointments pages and began looking for a job. Most people would have left it for the weekend, but she was back out there.

"I was feeling bruised and licking my wounds but I thought I'd have a quick look and this advertisement for Birthright jumped out at me. It couldn't have suited me better," she says. "People always assume that I just fell into politics as a hobby but I have always had a career. I only took a year out for my

first child and almost no time at all for the other two. So I couldn't stop working now."

She wrote her curriculum vitae immediately and then heard nothing for three weeks. When her secretary rang the Birthright office they told her that they had received 600 serious applications and that Mrs Barnes was among them. It took three months and three interviews before she knew she had got the job. She never doubted she was the right candidate.

Birthright's remit is to research into a wide range of women's health problems, from premature labour to osteoporosis and ovarian or cervical cancer. It is now a larger provider of funds to obstetrics and gynaecological research than the Medical Research Council.

As SDP spokesman on health,

Mrs Barnes tried to introduce no-fault compensation for patients who claim they have been injured by treatment on the NHS. She also campaigned for babies stillborn before 28 weeks and miscarried foetuses to be given a dignified burial or cremation. So her health credentials were good and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists already took her seriously. Her working skills are also appropriate.

She understands the media, she is adept at lobbying, she is a well-known and she has stamina.

She can also draw on her personal history. Mrs Barnes has had her share of anguish and is not afraid of using it to prove her point. At 26, when she was pregnant for the first time, she caught rubella. Doctors told her there was a 10 per cent chance of her child being handicapped. She decided to go ahead and Daniel, her first child, was born with only partial hearing.

"I know now it was the right decision — but only just," she says.

When she was pregnant for the third time at 39, she decided to have a test. "I knew I would have an abortion if they found my baby was handicapped. Life is about living, not just about existing." As a result of her experiences she was one of the MPs who fought hardest against David Atten's abortion bill.

While it used to be my duty to point out shortcomings, now I will be learning to find a way around them'



Campaigning for the health of mothers and babies: Rosie Barnes, the new director of Birthright, with daughter Daisy (left), son, Joseph, and niece Jamuna Johnson

She has also had a benign lump in her breast that caused her anxiety and makes her advocate more funding for research into breast cancer. Her pregnancies were difficult and she knows how daunting hospitals can be for expectant mothers. "It's like going through a sausage machine," she says.

Her other challenge will be dealing with the list of eminent council members, members and donors — Birthright has a reputation for attracting ladies who lunch, rock stars and royalty. On past public appearances her wardrobe, with its Doctor Who scarves and purple suits, may not match those of her celebrity donors. But that probably won't matter. She will command the respect of the charity's supporters.

If Birthright chose Mrs Barnes because she would just bumble along they have got her wrong. "A new sense of purpose and direction is needed, starting with the name," she says, explaining that she finds Birthright confusing. "When I applied for this job friends kept saying to me, 'But I thought you were in favour of choice, not anti-abortion.' I kept having to explain that Birthright is not an anti-abortion organisation. In fact it distances itself from the whole issue of abortion. I want something that you recognise immediately, like the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds." The Royal Society for the Protection of the Health of Women and Babies doesn't sound a bad title, just a little long.

Mrs Barnes would also like the charity to be known for more than raising money for infertility research and premature babies. "To raise funds the charity uses the emotional appeal of baby units and

young infertile couples but I want to make sure the less media-friendly issues come to the forefront," she says.

Women's health, she says, is still treated with derision by some men. "Do you remember when the MP Teresa Gorman stood up and talked about hormone replacement therapy in the House of Commons and the men started heckling her and saying, 'We always knew you were a man, anyway? Well, I want men to stop smirking when we talk about menstruation, tampons or breasts and start giving women's health

does not just affect half the population. It affects children whose mothers are ill, boyfriends, husbands and lovers whose partners become teetotal, ill or die. If women have problems, everyone does."

used to be my duty to point out shortcomings, now I will be learning to find a way around them," she says.

In her final interview Birthright asked Mrs Barnes if she would miss the glamour of being an MP. The new director says she has had enough of politics.

"Although I felt that I had to be honourable and stay with the SDP in the end I was increasingly isolated and felt more and more ineffectual," she says.

"Being a backbench MP can be very mundane. After one state opening and one late-night vote you have seen them all. The part of the work I enjoyed was the constituency work. Birthright will be far more challenging without being so time-consuming and I will have more time with the family."

And with that she was off to the hairdresser with Daisy.

The author of 84 Charing Cross Road turns her wit on New York

Hélène Haniff is one of the handful of people in the world whose celebrity rests on a single book. With *84 Charing Cross Road*, a cult was born.

It started in 1971 as a slim volume of the letters she wrote from New York in the 1950s to the antiquarian bookseller at that London address. People were captivated; it became a television drama, a West End play, then a film with Anne Bancroft as the author. Last Easter, the play was broadcast on radio. Each time it is rediscovered by a new audience, another avalanche of mail arrives at the East 72nd Street apartment where the tiny, thin, spiky Miss Haniff still lives.

"People now write to say they got the film of *84* out of the video store because the man told them it was charming. 'And then I went and bought the book,' they say. 'Have you written anything new?' She hasn't, but there is a new volume of Haniff called *Letter From New York*, an anthology of the monthly broadcasts she did on *Woman's Hour* ten years ago.

The pieces were hugely popular and a publisher, having heard someone say how much they missed them, asked to see the scripts. "Well, who keeps old scripts? I crawled along the floor in the storage cabinet under my bookshelves and came up with a faded Xerox copy. Anyway I sent it over and back came a vast basket of flowers which meant she liked them. I was still against the idea, but my friend Arlene, who is a better judge of what I write than I, read each page with a beatific smile — and she isn't a smiler."

The voice of Miss Haniff, in the broadcast and in life, is sardonic. An unadulterated Jewish New York maiden lady, she arrived in London for her first visit, to publish her book, six months after the old bookshop had closed.

She has since been back to London many times and her Anglophilic is undiminished but she did find the British needed educating about New York. "One of these days," she wrote 20 years ago, after her first visit to London, "I'm going to write a book about living in a 16-storey apartment house in New York complete with families, bachelors, career girls, a 90-year-old village idiot and a doorman

Life at East 72nd Street



Helene Haniff: an ardent Anglophile

who can name everyone of the 16 resident dogs. I am so tired of being told what a terrible place New York is to live — by people who don't live there.

The new book is just that: little essays about the neighbours, the dogs they walk on Dog Hill in Central Park, the gardens. Manhattan-dwellers create on the unlikeliest rooftops, the street parties they hold at the slightest excuse. Christmas shopping at Lord & Taylor, cosmopolitan delis and off-Broadway theatres, bazaars in April, and

putting out rows of chairs. Young audiences are accustomed to television and they're apt to just sit and stare. You have to tell yourself: 'I'm not a sitcom! It's not the lack of laughter I mind, it's the lack of expression on the faces.'

Few lives can have remained so unaltered by fame. She still lives in the same room, and in the same way, as when she wrote history books for children, and television scripts for the *Ellery Queen* mystery series. She would never have got to Hollywood as a scriptwriter. "For one thing, I don't drive a car. For another: Los Angeles is not a city; it's a way of life but it's not for me. A friend told me that until the age of 50 a man will go wherever his work takes him. After 50 he will do anything that lets him stay where he is." Miss Haniff was already past that watershed when *84* changed her life.

The first 15 years in New York were spent in furnished rooms and hotel rooms. "I had a room once on East 95th, a grey stone walk-up with bars over the window so the drunks couldn't crawl in from the bar next door. We all got notice one day because the building was being renovated. I had 11 addresses in 18 weeks. Now, they are asking \$750 a month for a fourth floor walk-up in the same building! I wouldn't pay that if it was lined with *urnium*."

Her visit was, she is convinced, her last to Britain. "I am no longer willing to go through what you have to go through at airports. I wouldn't have come if Arlene hadn't come too. Arlene was born knowing that porters are waiting to take her bags."

Nothing could dampen her enthusiasm for literary London though, or her keenness to visit writers' shrines. One day she had been to visit Keats's house in Hampstead, north London, and since we were in the area and she had lately admired *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, I asked her if she would like to see John le Carré's house, and showed down outside it. As we stared, the front door opened and out came the man himself. "That's him," I whispered. "Wah!" she drawled. "They showed me Keats's house, but they never showed me le Carré."

VALERIE GROVE

MUM SAYS SHE LIKES GLASS BECAUSE IT'S RECYCLABLE. I JUST LIKE THE SOUND IT MAKES IN THE BOTTLE BANK.

The average family throws out as much as a tonne of glass every year. So it's hardly surprising more and more people are making a noise about recycling. But do you sometimes wonder whether saving the odd marble jar for the bottle bank will really make much difference to the environment? All we ask is that you read on and make up your own mind.

For a start, the glass industry uses all the glass it gets back from the bottle banks.

This is largely because it's one of the easiest materials to recycle.

In fact, a quarter of all the glass on your supermarket shelves has been used before.

Last year, the glass you put in bottle banks saved 450,000 tonnes of raw materials and over 50 million litres of oil

enough to run your central heating for about 20,000 years. And each time it goes through the recycling process, it saves more.

Reasons enough, you might think, for liking the sound of glass.

Well, it's also hygienic, it never affects the taste of food or drink and it even keeps things fresher for longer than other packaging materials.

And for once, saving the environment doesn't cost you. Glass is still one of the cheapest packaging materials around.

So please keep on using the bottle bank. A bottle here and a jar there might not sound much.

But for your children and your children's children, the recycling message is amongst the most important they are ever going to hear.

BRITISH GLASS

Recession to the rescue of old houses

As developers retreat, openings present themselves for private buyers eager to restore classic country properties.
Rachel Kelly surveys opportunities

Few chateaux are more careful at this time than the owners of Scotland's dilapidated country houses. These owners could once feel confident that they would be able to sell their properties to developers for a profit, and would wait patiently for the highest bidder. But that was in the Eighties. Scotland's manors and castles were snapped up by developers and house-builders for conversion to hotels, flats, and more, than anywhere else in the country, golf clubs.

Owners no longer have such a range of would-be buyers. Although a few commercial developers are still interested in buying, large developers in the past two years have been beating a retreat south, whence many of them came, or into the arms of the receivers. Ironically, the recession has opened opportunities for private restorers of Scottish country houses.

The chief expert on such opportunities is Mary Miers. Based at the Scottish Civic Trust, she runs the trust's buildings at Risk Service. Established in January 1990 and funded by Historic Scotland, the equivalent of English Heritage, Miss Miers has set up a computer database of all historic buildings in Scotland known to be in danger because of neglect or difficulty of maintenance. Over a thousand such buildings are now on her register and they are ripe for the small-time restorer.

Miss Miers says: "There is still plenty of interest in restoring manageable country houses from private restorers, and plenty of such houses are in need of rescue. Some owners are still unresponsive to such private restorers despite the disappearance of many of the bigger developers."

In her view, the problem with many moderate-sized country houses is not so much lack of interest from the restoring public as the intransigence of their owners. She cites Auchentholme House, Balloch, on the shores of Loch Lomond in Strathclyde, as a typical example of such proprietorial procrastination. The 18th-century mansion was used as hotel until 1981. Then it was abandoned and has been decaying for nearly a decade.

The owner is known to be unwilling to sell. Dumbarion District Council, which says the owner has refused any contact when approached on the matter, should

serve a repairs notice," Miss Miers says. "Action, not talk is urgently needed before another winter passes, and if the owner cannot afford to do anything, he must be persuaded to sell, in the interest of saving this category A listed building."

Plenty of other potential rescuers have expressed interest in the building, Miss Miers says. Her hope is that the recession will mean that owners no longer expect the crazy prices commanded by such country houses during the 1980s, and will therefore be able to attract more sensible restorers.

Owner intransigence will melt

too, in the face of the increasing activity of conservation officers scattered throughout Scotland's councils, which may shame them into action, as may the ever-brighter glare of publicity.

A private buyer is the Scottish Civic Trust's preferred buyer for such family-sized houses. Small, manageable country houses with good communications have never been short of such buyers, even



Under threat: Auchentholme

when they are in a deplorable state. It is the larger stately homes that are unsuitable for most families and are at greatest risk, such as Heveringham Hall in Suffolk. On the market for £4.5 million, it is unlikely to find a private buyer with the means to maintain such an important historic mansion.

Lord Ridley of Liddesdale's thesis that the *nouveaux riches* would take on such houses and establish themselves as *so-sques* has yet to be proved. Although Alan Bond moved into Glympton, Oxford-



Old values restored: Alan and Fidelity Dean at their home, Balgome, near Edinburgh

shire, Peter de Savary moved into Littlecote in Wiltshire, and Abdul Ghazi moved into Heveringham, they all moved out quickly. Few latter-day gentry have put down permanent roots at such enormous houses. Smaller houses fare better. Balgome, near Edinburgh, had long attracted family buyers. The house had been owned by the Grant-Suttie family since 1698, but Sir Philip Grant-Suttie had moved into a farmhouse more than 20 years ago, leaving the main house empty. The building was riddled with dry rot and with collapsed ceilings and walls.

Despite interest from developers over the years, Sir Philip delayed the sale, and only thanks to the delicate negotiations of Marcus Dean, an architect and conserva-

tionist, did he finally agree to sell to the Dean family in 1989. Alan Dean, a retired doctor, and Fidelity, his wife are now installed. "Of course, the house is too big for us," he says. "But we liked the house, and its position and were prepared to take on something bigger than we needed. The rooms are not too grand."

Some opportunist homeowners sold out in the 1980s to developers, many of whom bought more than they could develop. Now such houses are back on the market at inflated prices. Their frustrated owners and would-be developers want to sell but cannot afford to reduce their prices without taking a big loss. Some wrongly assume that planning permissions they have secured but not implemented add a hefty premium to near wrecks that look romantic but require big expenditure on basic maintenance.

One such house is Balintore Castle, near Kilmuir in Tayside. An exuberant Scottish baronial-style castle, the property has changed hands several times recently. The owner, Mr R. Kelbie, bought it without even inspecting the interior and put it back on the market swiftly once he realised the nature of his speculation, and for an unrealistic price in the view of the need for more than £1 million of repairs. He has recently halved his asking price to £50,000.

Such a house is with its double-height saloon and abundance of

turrets is unlikely to appeal to the private restorer, and would need a commercial rescuer. But other houses that once might have been turned into golf courses now have a second chance to be returned to use as family homes. The picture is far from rosy, and still under threat are plenty of buildings, such as Auchentholme House in Kilmalcolm, Inverclyde, which lacks appeal for family buyers and in which developers are no longer interested, either. But for once, the recession has a silver lining.

Architectural antiques have become a popular target for thieves, but buyers of possibly stolen goods could help to stem the illegal trade

Stopping short at a steal

and are therefore at greater risk. Building work also endangers house contents.

A Metropolitan Police official says: "There is generally no forced entry. If people are used to builders working, they are used to the sounds of banging and chiselling and will not notice a team of crooks removing fittings."

Mr Cameron lays part of the blame for the increase of theft at the feet of the press. "When a piece is stolen, the national newspapers overprice it to make a good story. They talk about Georgian door frames worth between £20,000 and £30,000. Thieves assume that the goods are there for the taking. But

Victorian marble mantelpieces go for only £400 or £500 each. The thief finds he cannot sell the piece for the amount he expected."

"Nine out of 10 times he can't get rid of it at all because it is obviously stolen and he ends up junking it. The trade papers, if they report it, just say that another piece has been stolen."

At the top end of the market, Peter Craven, antiques officer of the West Yorkshire police force, says that thieves are becoming more specialised.

"They will photograph an item in an empty house and hawk it around dealers to get the best price, telling the dealer they have a

demolition contract. Half an hour after a piece is stolen, it is often sold," he says.

One obvious precaution buyers can take is to deal exclusively with reputable auctioneers. Next month, the Duke of Westminster is holding an antique sale through Sotheby's of household effects and architectural fittings from Eaton Hall, near Chester. The sale is a clear-out of property going back to the original mansion. There are many architectural pieces that no longer have place in the present hall, which was built in the modern style in 1961.

Among the items under the hammer is 56ft of oak balcony balustrading, with carved panels

showing the Westminster portcullis and stylised Tudor roses, which is expected to make £3,000 to £5,000. (The sale will be in the stables on September 21.)

Most dealers are careful about sellers. Mr Saunders points out that stolen goods are more trouble than they are worth.

"Dealers will lose all the money connected with the stolen piece – not just the purchase price, but money spent on restoration, insurance and advertising, and they will be suspected of handling. Word spreads very fast."

"We can't afford to risk our reputation," says Bob Lovell, a director of London's biggest sal-

vage dealers, The London Architectural Salvage & Supply Company (Lasso). "If anything makes us uncomfortable, we check."

Precautions include a subscription to *Trace* and a board carrying photographs of stolen objects. "If a scruffy chap offers two urns with wet mud on them from the back of a lorry, we take his number and phone the police. We like to work very closely with the police."

Lasso's stock comes through dealers known to the company, from auctions and through private vendors. Sally Baily of Baily's Architectural Antiques, a garden furniture specialist, obtains her stock locally and will not

buy any goods from intermediaries.

Much can be done to reduce the chances of theft. Mr Parisien suggests boxing in large items in empty houses to deter the casual thief and recommends posting a notice outside a house where work is in progress giving the official site hours and the number of the police station to ring if there is any building activity outside them.

If the owner goes away, the police should be informed as a matter of course. Mr Cameron recommends cementing large items in place.

Photographs and measurements of fixtures and fittings are essential. Without them, recovery is impossible. Mr Cameron is perpetually surprised by the number of people who live with a piece for 20 years and can't describe it. Every month the A4 pages of *Trace*, which was started three and a half years ago, are filled with photographs and descriptions of stolen art and antiques, as well as lists of items recovered, now totalling more than £6 million's worth.

The police sometimes have to return suspected stolen pieces to owners because they can't prove the goods were obtained dishonestly. Mr Parisien is keen that insurance companies demand photographs of insured items as a prerequisite for coverage, and that members of the public should seek the provenance of every antique fitting they buy. Westminster already demands this for every antique fitting put into its £11,500 listed buildings.

David Prout, Westminster's principal conservation officer says: "It is some measure of protection. Lots of new fittings come from Ireland where listed buildings do not enjoy the same level of protection, and the provenances are vague. "We get the feeling that a few chimneypieces are doing a merry dance around Westminster, via the auction houses. But the measures we recommend to people are having an effect: the level of reported thefts is nothing like as frequent."

Once an item has disappeared, currently there is little chance of its recovery. There is evidence that much of the better quality house fittings go abroad where, even if it is traced, the owner cannot get an item back because British law relating to stolen goods bought in good faith does not apply.

FIONA HOOK

When the home fires burn

SUMMERTIME, and thoughts turn to a month in the country in a cottage: the fantasy perpetuated on a thousand chocolate-box lids, ceramic mantelpiece trinkets and embroidered antimacassars, Rachel Kelly writes.

The reality of cottage-buying is rather different. The country's estimated 50,000 thatched cottages are four times more likely to be damaged by fire than other properties, and the average cost resulting from such accidents is £100,000, according to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.

Architectural theft is also seen as easy money. "Any lad with a lorry can take a doosie," Donald Cameron of Crowther of Syon Lodge, an architectural antiques dealer, says. "All he needs is a crowbar and a dark night."

Empty houses and those undergoing renovation are particularly vulnerable. "All you have to do is phone an estate agent to ask whether the house in his window has vacant possession," says Phillip Saunders, publisher of *Trace*, a magazine aimed at reuniting stolen items with their rightful owners.

"If it has, the house is unlikely to have an alarm on. Houses up for auction present an even easier target since no check is run on the people who go to view."

During the recession, Georgian office conversions in Mayfair and Belgravia remain empty for longer

hot gases and sparks away from the building. The Norfolk fire service says a minimum of 1.5m from the thatch ridge to the top of the thatch.

After chimneys, the service says, electrical faults are the second most common cause of fire. The answer is a five-yearly check. When a thatch is replaced, the Norfolk service says it is best if the new thatch is laid over a layer of plasterboard or fire-retarding insulation board to prevent fire from spreading on the underside of the thatch and burning thatch falling into the house.

Such is the concern among cottage-owners that the leaflet has already had to be reprinted and Leicestershire and Lincolnshire fire services now deliver the leaflet to every thatched property in their areas. Those who follow its advice could be rewarded by lower insurance premiums.

John Albiog & Partners, an insurance agent at Sudbury in Suffolk, promises lower premiums for those who follow the Norfolk instructions.

Copies are available free from John Albiog & Partners (0787 880338). Free advice is also obtainable from the National Association of Master Thatchers (0494 443198).



THE SAFE THATCHED HOUSE

The Georgian Group, 071-377 1722. The London Architectural Salvage & Supply Company, 071-739 0448. Baily's Architectural Antiques, 0989 63015; Crowther of Syon Lodge, 081-560 7978

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